National Library of Canada
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Canadian Theses Service
Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.

NL-339 (r. 88/04) c

Canada

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE PORTRAYAL OF UNEMANCIPATED AND EMANCIPATED WOMEN IN GERMAN NATURALIST DRAMA

BY

JACQUELINE DOIG

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF ARTS IN GERMAN LITERATURE.

DEPARTMENT OF GERMANIC LANGUAGES

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL 1992

National Library of Canada
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Canadian Theses Service
Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-77055-4

Canada

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF AUTHOR: Jacqueline Doig

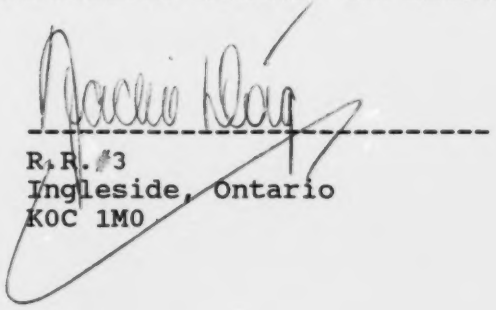
TITLE OF THESIS: The Portrayal of Unemancipated and Emancipated Women in German Naturalist Drama

DEGREE: Master of Arts

YEAR THIS DEGREE GRANTED: Fall 1992

Permission is hereby granted to the University of Alberta Library to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only.

The author reserves all other publication and other rights in association with the copyright in the thesis, and except as hereinbefore provided neither the thesis nor any substantial portion thereof may be printed or otherwise reproduced in any material form whatever without the author's prior written permission.



R.R. #3
Ingleside, Ontario
K0C 1M0

October 7, 1992

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled THE PORTRAYAL OF UNEMANCIPATED AND EMANCIPATED WOMEN IN GERMAN NATURALIST DRAMA submitted by JACQUELINE DOIG in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS in GERMAN LITERATURE.

Dr. Raleigh Whitinger

Dr. Holger Pausch

Prof. Paul Robberecht

Date: Tuesday, September 1, 1992

DEDICATION

To my parents

Graeme and Mary Jane Doig

ABSTRACT

A large body of secondary literature dealing with German Naturalist plays leans toward a negative interpretation of their portrayal of both emancipated and unemancipated female characters. Emancipated women are most often characterized as inconsistent in their behaviour and as destructive outside forces threatening a firmly established patriarchal order. Unemancipated women are depicted as weak characters, who demonstrate little will to change their circumstances, thus showing no growth as dramatic figures. This thesis will demonstrate that the portrayal of both types of women is essentially positive. These portrayals focus on a realistic depiction of women and their issues in accordance with the theories of Naturalist drama; yet this realistic depiction brings serious social problems to the stage for the first time and invites critical reflection on their causes and on the necessity and possibility of change.

This thesis will also pay particular attention to the role that female figures play on the level of poetological discourse that is often so prominent in these plays. It will note in particular how their relationships to the poetic and artistic works cited or evoked in each play are used either to reveal their thraldom to the conventions and traditions of an earlier age, or to present these figures as vehicles for a

departure from poetic and artistic convention that hinders critical reflection on social problems.

The first major section of this thesis will examine two plays: Vor Sonnenaufgang by Gerhart Hauptmann and Die Familie Selicke by Arno Holz and Johannes Schlaf, which depict unemancipated women struggling with the issues of confinement in an oppressive patriarchal milieu.

Part II of this thesis will look at Hauptmann's Einsame Menschen and Hermann Sudermann's Heimat which portray emancipated women and their rebellion against the existing order. It will show how these plays suggest a further turn in German Naturalism toward an essentially positive, albeit realistic, consideration of the possibilities and problems of women's emancipation. It will also demonstrate how those women exhibit a positive strength in their confrontation with problematic, changing times, with particular attention to their positive influence on the unemancipated women with whom they interact.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Raleigh Whitinger for his guidance during the span of this project. Dr. Whitinger laid the groundwork for this venture, and has provided much time and assistance to ensure a successful project. Sincerest thanks to Dr. Holger Pausch, who acted as a committee member, for his friendly advice and encouragement.

My gratitude and respect are extended to both Dr. Gerhard Baumgaertel at Trent University, who encouraged me to pursue further academic goals, and to Dr. Manfred Prokop whose tremendous moral support has enabled me to realize them.

My appreciation is also extended to Chris Lorey and Dana Hope, Heidi Bundschoks, Waldemar Riemer and Jill Cerezke, and Helen and David Milne for their friendship and generosity which have made me feel most welcome in Edmonton.

Thanks to friends at home and abroad for their kindness and hospitality during my never-ending search for German language proficiency.

Most of all, I am indebted to my dear friend Rob Wilkins for his unfailing support over the years, as well as his genuine interest in my various endeavours.

August, 1991

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 1

Chapter One

The Unemancipated Women - The Early Plays .. 11

I. Vor Sonnenaufgang 12
A. Helene's Confinement 15
B. Helene's Downfall: Alfred Loth and the Role of Alcohol 17
C. Helene's Relationship to Literature. 20
D. Concluding Remarks 22

II. Die Familie Selicke 24
A. Toni's Entrapment 27
B. Toni's Prospect of Freedom 32
C. Toni's Relationship to Art 34
D. Concluding Remarks 35

Chapter Two

The Emancipated Women - The Later Plays 37

I. Einsame Menschen 39
A. Dramatic Presentation of Heroic Figures 41
B. The Portrayal of a Complex Character. 47
C. Emotional Growth of an Unemacipated Woman 57
D. Concluding Remarks 64

II. Heimat 66
A. Authoritative Men and the Established Bourgeois Order 68
B. The Emancipated Woman's Rebellion Against Old Art and Old Orders 73
C. The Positive Impact of an Emancipated Woman 78
D. Concluding Remarks 82

Conclusion 84

Bibliography 87

Introduction

Referring to Anna Mahr in Gerhart Hauptmann's drama Einsame Menschen, one recent critic concludes that the author has failed in his attempt "to paint a favorable image of [...] what he perceives to be a modern woman," and portrayed her instead as "self-centered," of "weak character," and "insensitive."[1] Schroeder's position is typical of a long dominant tendency among critics of German Naturalism to arrive at simplistic judgments regarding social issues that Naturalist plays treat with unrelenting realism--and thus to overlook aspects of the dramatic texts that, as this thesis will argue, represent a positive contribution to modern drama's treatment of women's emancipation.

Against the prevailing wisdom exemplified by Schroeder's claim, this thesis will argue that the failure of major Naturalist playwrights to portray unequivocally appealing and triumphant emancipated women does not speak for their misgivings about women or emancipation. It will examine four important German Naturalist dramas to reveal instead their essentially positive--though realistic--views on the situation of women and on the need for emancipatory change. This thesis will also demonstrate how the portrayal of women involves breaks with dramatic convention that foster critical

---

[1]Sabine Schroeder, "Anna Mahr in Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Einsame Menschen.' The 'Emancipated Woman' Re-examined," The Germanic Review 54 (1979) : 126-28.

reflection on the social problems involved and on the need for change, rather than sympathetic identification with a male figure or with a suffering female.

From the late 1880s to the mid 1890s, Gerhart Hauptmann, the pair Arno Holz and Johannes Schlaf, and Hermann Sudermann emerged as leaders in a move toward drama that tended, under the influence of Emil Zola and Henrik Ibsen, to a "consistently realistic" or "naturalist" portrayal of modern society.[2] They called for an objective, scientifically exact focus on individuals caught up in a modern society changing under the influence of industrialization and urbanization, riven by questions such as socialist reform and women's emancipation. These playwrights were thus ill-served by an older generation's poetic realism that tended to follow an earlier age's demand that "poetry" idealize and beautify.

Not surprisingly, major dramatic breakthroughs and successes by these four authors often dealt with problems of social reform or the question of women's emancipation--and

---

[2]"Konsequenter Realismus" is a term which appears in Arno Holz' theories on Naturalism. In practice, Holz and Schlaf's narrative Papa Hamlet (1889) was the first of their works to demonstrate this new depiction of reality. Holz was faithful to his theories, which painted a stark and realistic picture of modern life, long after the official Naturalist period was considered over. The term "Naturalismus" pertains to the concepts surrounding the historical and literary circumstances represented during the late nineteenth century. The epoch embodies old and new literary techniques, and calls for an accurate reflection of nature (i.e. society) in its art forms. For a basic history of the movement, including relevant literary and historical details, see Roy C. Cowen, Der Naturalismus. Kommentar zu einer Epoche (München: Winkler, 1973) 7-110.

sometimes both.[3] Accordingly, some of these plays gave prominent place to female figures who represented various aspects of the problematic situation of women in that society. They depicted women as either confined, oppressed and trapped in domestic situations representing the traditional patriarchal order, or they characterize women as excluded, as cast out of the narrow, established order as a result of their emancipatory impulses.

Four such plays, Vor Sonnenaufgang (1889) and Einsame Menschen (1891) by Gerhart Hauptmann, Die Familie Selicke (1890) by Arno Holz and Johannes Schlaf and Heimat (1893) by Hermann Sudermann, are each considered either seminal in some respect, or typical of its author's Naturalist phase. Each features a female figure who embodies problematic women's issues of that time.

The two earliest Naturalist sensations Vor Sonnenaufgang and Die Familie Selicke feature "trapped" females. Vor Sonnenaufgang is generally considered the first German Naturalist play ever staged. Helene Krause lives in a family who gain their fortune through the exploitation of the local

---

[3]For information regarding the first (1860) and second (1890) phase of the women's movement in Germany see Roy Pascal, From Naturalism to Expressionism. German Literature and Society 1880-1918 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973) 203-11; Richard J. Evans, The Feminist Movement in Germany, 1894-1933, SAGE Studies in 20th Century History 6 (London: Sage, 1976) 35-44; Michaela Giesing, 'Ibsens Nora und die wahre Emanzipation der Frau.' Zum Frauenbild im wilhelminischen Theater, ed. Renate Möhrmann, Studien zum Theater, Film und Fernsehen 4 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1984) 110ff.

poverty-stricken workers by her brother-in-law. Typical for young women of the day, she was educated at a convent to the Gymnasium level, and while she seeks solace in her love of literature, she longs to break away from the deplorable conditions which surround her. She is attracted to Alfred Loth, a temperance crusader and social reformer who has travelled to the area to do a journalistic report on the impoverished mine workers. Yet when he decides to leave Helene because of her family's alcoholic background, she commits suicide.

The other trapped woman is Toni Selicke in Holz's and Schlaf's Die Familie Selicke. Toni is likewise caught in an environment of alcohol and misery, yet when she is offered a chance to escape her hardship, she relinquishes the offer of marriage to theology student Gustav Wendt. Toni sees herself as the primary cohesive element in her family which includes an alcoholic father, a self-pitying mother, and a deathly ill younger sister. Like many women of the time she feels bound to her family and she feels the needs and concerns of her immediate family to be of greater importance than her own happiness.

The two later plays Einsame Menschen and Heimat offer emancipated women who follow paths resembling those made by the enlightened women of the late nineteenth century. In Hauptmann's drama, Anna Mahr is a young student who has left her family and homeland in order to study. At this time it

was not possible for women to study in Germany, and so she must seek her destiny in a foreign land. The intellectual companionship she finds with the married Johannes Vockerat fulfils her longing for acceptance and warmth which offsets her otherwise alienated existence. But when her friendship with Johannes Vockerat reaches precarious romantic levels, she moves on.

Hermann Sudermann's Magda is an emancipated woman who has escaped the stifling existence in a patriarchal and oppressive order. She has ventured out on her own to become a famous opera singer, gaining financial and social independence. Her return home brings back memories of the stifled existence she once led, and the perceived notion of her disrespect and dishonour in deference to the family leads to her father's early death.

These brief outlines indicate the basic sympathetic interest of these authors in women's issues of the day. Yet since the earliest reviews, the opinion has predominated that these dramatists were either unable or unwilling to offer a positive or even sympathetic portrayal of women's problems or emancipated women. Those who first staged and reviewed the plays were often members of the patriarchy and assumed that dramas by male writers required identification with male figures. Female characters were treated superficially, considered only of secondary importance, relevant solely with respect to the "hero's" dilemma. Moreover, many of these

recipients viewed emancipated women as dangerous or destructive and often forced such a reading upon figures such as Anna Mahr.

Those of feminist, anti-patriarchal inclination applauded the sympathetic gesture of the Naturalist dramatists, but then despaired when they found a realistic portrayal of problems encountered by women, rather than a woman who embodied the accomplishments of the feminist ideal. They registered compassion and sympathy but nonetheless deplored the absence of a heroine of their cause. Noting this trend, more recent feminist critics have tended towards these same biases about emancipated women and dramatic presentation which continue to obscure possible contributions of some of these plays to women's issues and to modern drama.[4]

Basically, modern critics tend to share with contemporaries of these young Naturalists assumptions regarding the dramatic portrayal of heroic figures. They assume that these dramatists intended to appeal for emotional sympathy with a main figure; they also are inclined to assume that that figure would be the male resembling the author.

---

[4]See Giesing; Schroeder 125-30; Jenny C. Hortenbach, Freiheitsstreben und Destruktivität. Frauen in den Dramen August Strindbergs und Gerhart Hauptmanns (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1965) 91-107; Naomi Stefan, "Die Frauenfiguren in Gerhart Hauptmanns 'Einsame Menschen' und Ulrike Woerners 'Vorfrühling': Universal oder trivial?," Die Frau als Heldin und Autorin: Neue kritische Ansätze zur deutschen Literatur, ed. Wolfgang Paulsen (Bern: Francke, 1979) 190-200; Lorelei Allan, "Naturalists and the Woman Question: Images of the Middle-Class 'Emanzipierte' in German and Scandanavian Drama," diss., Brown, 1982.

Such biases, now as then, obscure the view for an important aspect of Naturalist drama: the movement's turn toward stark social realism and at the same time its turn away from conventional drama's emphasis on emotional identification and catharsis. These particular tendencies overlook how German Naturalist drama turned toward a realistically exact portrayal of present day social situations and problems so as to invite rational, critical reflection on the problems portrayed, rather than emotional identification with any one figure.

Accordingly, some recent analyses of Naturalism's dramatic portrayal of emancipated women tend to arrive at negative evaluations of how these dramas have presented women's issues. They often approach the figures portrayed with all too modern preconceptions of what constitutes an emancipated woman. In this way they fail to see how these dramas focused constructive critical attention on various issues by portraying the real problems that women faced in the 1890s. In addition, these critics approach these plays with assumptions regarding the plays' emotional sympathy with male figures. In this manner they overlook the critical distance that the playwrights might have wanted to direct at those figures, and thus misjudge the objective portrayal of the problems facing women.

In summary, I suggest that two dominant trends have neglected aspects of how these dramas portray problematic female figures. Critics in general tended from early on to

assume that these dramas, for all their revolutionary turn toward realistic portrayal, still adhered to certain tendencies of traditional drama: above all by appealing to an audience's tendency to identify sympathetically with a figure exhibiting idealistic values in the face of crisis (as with many views about Loth, Toni Selicke, Johannes Vockerat). In the face of this tendency, feminist critics who saw these dramas failing to portray an ideal and successful emancipated woman concluded that the authors were more interested in the suffering and struggle of prominent male figures and averse to any sympathetic view of any emancipatory move on women's part.[5]

Some critics, however, have pointed to aspects of the texts that support the call for a revision of these dominant trends. Some point to aspects of these plays that indicate sympathy with the predicament and strengths of the major female figures (e.g. Lorelei Allan on Anna, Giesing on Helene). Others point to a trend in Naturalist dramas to depart from traditional drama's appeal for an identificatory response in favour of critical reflection on the causes and possible solutions of the realistically portrayed social problems.[6]

---

[5]See Giesing and Gail Finney, Women in Modern Drama. Freud, Feminism, and the European Theater at the Turn of the Century (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1989).

[6]See Dieter Kafitz, "Struktur und Menschenbild naturalistischer Dramatik," Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie 97 (1978) : 225-55; Klaus Müller-Salget, "Autorität

I propose that precisely such elements combine in these plays to produce a view on women's problems that is by no means as indifferent or deprecatory as the main stream of criticism implies. Rather, these plays call sympathetic attention to the predicament of women and at times even to the strength with which they express emancipatory impulses in a difficult situation. Also, they show these female figures playing an important role in poetological contexts that, on the one hand, reveal how adherence to traditional poetry tends to stifle more toward social change and, on the other hand, propose a break from traditional approaches in favour of one that, rather than appealing to an emotional response to individual figures, invites objective and critical reflection on the problems depicted.

I intend to investigate each drama, noting major trends in their reception and interpretation with special attention to two basic elements of the texts that support a positive revision of how these plays treat the problems and potentials of women's emancipation. Important on the one hand are those motifs and images that call attention to the predicament of these trapped or exiled female figures, highlighting the confinements and perversions that existing orders impose upon their development. Important on the other hand is the

---

und Familie im naturalistischen Drama," Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie 103 (1984) : 502-19; Raleigh Whitinger, "Art Works and Artistic Activity in Holz/Schlaf's 'Die Familie Selicke': Reflections on the Play's Naturalistic and Epic Consistency," Michigan Germanic Studies 14 (1988) 139-50.

function of the female figures in passages that invite critical reflection on how art and poetry deal with social reality. The portrayal of the female figures in these dramas calls attention to how the traditional social structure and its poetry offer only the alternative of "encagement" and "exile" and illustrates the need to escape both of these restrictive situations. For in these plays, women appear either as trapped, as confined by an existing patriarchal order and surrounded by a poetry that glorifies that system, or as exiled, seen as destructive forces, yet speaking for a poetry that moves away from emotional identification with heroes in favour of objective reflection on the necessities and problems of change.

Chapter One

The Unemancipated Women - The Early Plays

Gerhart Hauptmann's drama Vor Sonnenaufgang and Arno Holz's and Johannes Schlaf's play Die Familie Selicke both illustrate examples of failed emancipation. The early Naturalist plays demonstrate the need for some change favouring emancipation by showing Helene Krause and Toni Selicke struggling unsuccessfully to break with an existing patriarchal order. Both plays emphasize the complexities that confront any effort to break free and the painful choices involved. While depicting various obstacles which prevent change, these plays foster critical reflection on the social situation with which the two women struggle, rather than provoking the traditional emotional identification with these women as they make their final sacrificial gestures.

The oppressed situation of these women is illustrated in both dramas by passages that reveal how they relate to literary works. Helene and Toni tend to remain enslaved in the patriarchal order as they imitate old works or ideals prominent in these works. These initial Naturalist plays show the destructive and stifling effect of adhering to old ideology and old art.

I. Vor Sonnenaufgang

Hauptmann's Vor Sonnenaufgang premiered on October 20, 1889 at the Lessingtheater (under the auspices of the Freie Bühne) in Berlin. The work, considered the first German Naturalist play, had been published prior to the drama's opening, and caused a furore among the general public due to its "immoral" content. By the time the drama was performed "[...] the play had aroused so much controversy that a scandal was all but inevitable."[7] Warren Maurer indicates further that:

> "Vor Sonnenaufgang was bound to shock public morality in 1889 because it presented, openly and directly, human degradation to an extent unheard of in previous German belles lettres."[8]

The reason for the public's contention was due only partially to the portrayal of morally corrupt characters and their unscrupulous conduct. The stage provided Hauptmann a place to make statements about the divisions between the rich and the poor in Socialist Germany. Hauptmann's play, which depicts the luxurious existence of the Krause household against a poverty-stricken backdrop, was viewed as a revolutionary piece of work whose effects would be felt over many years in German drama. "There was a general view

---

[7]Warren R. Maurer, Gerhart Hauptmann, Twayne's World Author Ser. 670 (Boston: Twayne, 1982) 26.

[8]Maurer 27.

of Vor Sonnenaufgang as the first blow in a struggle against the existing order [...]."[9]

Naturalist playwrights sought to bring to light various issues concerned with social reform, and women's issues were an integral part of this depiction of the struggle against an oppressive order. Helene Krause is a trapped, confined woman, and could be considered a forerunner to Hauptmann's more liberated female figure--Anna Mahr in Einsame Menschen. Similarities to Ibsen's A Doll House are present in this Hauptmann play. Like Ibsen's Nora Helmer, Helene Krause chooses to abandon her existing life because of feelings of entrapment and despair. The depiction of Helene Krause clearly invites the audience to consider her in a sympathetic light. Yet many critics have ignored her as a representative of entrapment and rebellion, and focused instead on her role as supporting and enhancing the dominant male character, Alfred Loth.[10]

The tendency to focus on Loth as the hero seems to assume a traditional approach to drama that identifies with the male author's male hero, whereas some critics have already noted how Naturalism anticipates in many respects a break from those traditional tendencies in favour of a

---

[9]Alan Marshall, The German Naturalists and Gerhart Hauptmann. Reception and Influence, European University Studies 556 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1982) 120.

[10]See Allan, Giesing.

realistic depiction of society.[11] Conventional drama dictates an emotional identification with the leading, usually male, figure, whereas Naturalist drama moves away from this emotional identification with a prominent heroic figure and towards a conscious-raising approach to critical social issues. Playwrights seem to move away from this close focus on male heroes and focus more on the realistic portrayal of society. Hauptmann maintained, "Die Distanz, aus der man ein Drama sieht, darf sich während der Arbeit nicht verschieben."[12]

Critics have already noted the play's critical distance to Loth as a self-centred, hero-worshipping opportunist and his deafness to Helene's strength and predicament.[13] Both of these faults are emphasized from early on in several ways: through the emphasis on her entrapment in confining space, her interest in literature, her readiness to seek contact and fight injustice.

Vor Sonnenaufgang emphasizes the need for change and, above all, the rigidity and complexities that thwart Helene. Although change does not occur in this drama, Helene's drive

---

[11]Roy C. Cowen, Das deutsche Drama im 19. Jahrhundert (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1988) 199.

[12]Gerhart Hauptmann qtd. in Theorie des Naturalismus, ed. Theo Meyer (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1973) 286.

[13]See Cowen, Das deutsche Drama 126 and Raleigh Whitinger, "Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Vor Sonnenaufgang': On Alcohol and Poetry in German Naturalist Drama," The German Quarterly 63 (1990) : 83-91.

for emancipation, rather than inviting acceptance by audiences, encourages them to reflect critically about the social reasons for this failed emancipation.

I. A. Helene's Confinement

Hauptmann's use of spatial imagery demonstrates Helene's entrapment. She lives in the small impoverished coal mining town of Witzdorf with her alcoholic sister and father, her brother-in-law, step-mother and her lady-in-waiting. Her existence in this milieu is becoming desperate before the arrival of Alfred Loth, an old friend of her brother-in-law Hoffmann (I, 15).[14]

The family lives in luxurious surroundings while the impoverished workers trudge with their loads past the windows of the family farm house. Although it initially appears to guests such as Alfred Loth that this life of indulgence offers serenity and security in difficult economic times, the appalling reality behind the facade of well-being indicates the opposite. Helene at first appears as a bird in a gilded cage but soon proves to be a trapped bird yearning for freedom--deploring Kahl's bird hunting (I, 31) and trying to free trapped birds (II, 45). The excesses of luxury in the Krause household are repeatedly contrasted to the conditions which exist around them. Helene is

---

[14]Gerhart Hauptmann, Gerhart Hauptmann Sämtliche Werke, ed. Hans-Egon Hass, vol. 1 (Frankfurt/M: Propyläen, 1966) 9-98. All references to the two plays by Hauptmann discussed here will cite the act and the page numbers from volume I of the Centenar Ausgabe.

acutely aware of the destitution, and of where the money in her family came from. Her denouncement of the corruption of the family takes form in the support she gives Loth during various meal-time conversations when he condemns this situation.

Hoffmann is a corrupt businessman who exploits the local workers for his own gain and wealth. He harasses Helene while his alcoholic, pregnant wife lies in bed, off stage throughout the play. Rüdiger Bernhardt comments, "[...] dadurch aber verändert sich die Situation insbesondere Helenes, die sonst--ohne Loths Ankunft--das Opfer Hoffmanns geworden wäre [...]."[15] Helene must also contend with an alcoholic father who also makes advances at her (II, 40), as well as with a fiance she despises, an uneducated, ill-mannered lout involved with Helene's step-mother.

Convention forces her to remain in her existing circumstances. The factors of Helene's entrapment closely parallel the plight of many women during this time in history.[16] Helene has attended boarding school in Herrnhut

---

[15]Rüdiger Bernhardt, "Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Vor Sonnenaufgang,'" Weimarer Beiträge 6 (1984) : 974.

[16]Evans notes that, "Most girls' schools [...] gave their pupils an education geared to their supposed future position as housewives and mothers, concentrating on practical household tasks and supposedly 'feminine' subjects such as art and music, to the neglect of subjects such as mathematics and the natural sciences which might be useful to the growing number of girls entering employment" (20).

(I, 27) and has been exposed to the outside world. She returns to her family in Witzdorf because her status as an unmarried young woman prevents her from independent economic survival. She is acutely aware of her predicament, and her frustration is directed towards her brother-in-law, Hoffmann: "Ja, du hast es eben gut, du kannst gehen, wohin du willst" (I, 25).

Helene is an educated woman unable to secure the resources which would enable her to leave the confines of her surroundings. She is a young woman trapped in a vicious circle of patriarchal oppression and alcohol abuse. The arrival of another male figure in her life serves only to delay the effects of this morally degenerate family. His arrival enables a move away from dependence on one male figure but shifts it to another.

I. B. Helene's Downfall: Alfred Loth and the Role of Alcohol

There are then a variety of reasons for Helene's fate, all of which involve alcohol. Alcohol abuse worsens her situation in Hoffmann's household; Loth's stand against alcohol makes him more attractive to Helene and this gets her hopes up. The alcoholic history of Helene's family, however, drives Loth to flight: he refuses to risk fathering children inherently prone to alcoholism.

The desperation of Helene's family milieu is evident from references to her unhappiness and suicide attempts. Yet her resolve not to turn to alcohol is defiant: "Dieses

ganze Dasein überhaupt--[...]. Ich gehe fort! ich renne fort--und wenn ihr mich nicht loslaßt, dann...Strick, Messer, Revolver!...mir egal!--ich will nicht auch zum Branntwein greifen wie meine Schwester" (III, 55). She has witnessed the destruction of her family, including her father, sister and sister's child--all victims of alcoholism.

Alcohol and the myths surrounding its effects on future generations lead Loth to make his swift departure. When Loth learns that the drunkard at the inn is Helene's father (V, 88), that Helene's sister is alcoholic and that her first child died of alcohol poisoning (V, 93), his hopes for their children are shattered (V, 94-95). As Leroy R. Shaw formulates the problem, Helene and other members of her family are trapped because of this myth:

> "This includes Hoffmann [...], Helene Krause, the innocent victim, and, most significantly, the reforming protagonist himself, who cannot escape the consequences of being what he has become through his reaction to the cultural lie."[17].

Although Alfred Loth may initially appear as a means of escape for Helene, their friendship flourishes into a relationship based on mutual admiration. In Helene's eyes, Loth enters the Krause household full of fresh optimism and great plans. Loth, a socialist reformer, stands against everything that Helene also despises in her environment. He

---

[17]Leroy R. Shaw, Witness of Deceit. Gerhart Hauptmann as a Critic of Society (Berkeley: U of California P, 1958) 42.

claims to admire self-sufficient women (III, 63-64), and is against the acquisition of the type of material wealth which the Krauses possess. Most importantly, however, he is an abstainer (I, 32-34).

Loth is a well-read, intelligent man with a purpose in life that Helene finds attractive--a man who is fighting for "das Glück aller" (II, 47). One would be surprised if Helene did not feel an attraction to such a man, as he incorporates the ideals for which she herself strives, and at the same time denounces the evils of drinking and excessive wealth which have contributed to a large extent to her own unhappy situation. More importantly though, Loth offers Helene the chance to flee the confines of her surroundings. The sense of desperation that Helene exudes, coupled with her determination to escape her deplorable conditions, is only intensified by Loth's presence.

Once the possibility for Helene's salvation is evident, readers follow her actions with hope: "Der Zuschauer hofft mit ihr, wünscht eine Vereinigung des Paares, weil er darin wie die Protagonistin selbst die einzige Rettungsmöglichkeit sieht."[18] The connection between her admiration for Loth, her desire to escape her situation and the reality of her

---

[18]Werner Bellmann, "Gerhart Hauptmann: 'Vor Sonnenaufgang' (1889)," Interpretationen. Dramen des Naturalismus, ed. Werner Bellmann (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1988) 28.

circumstances make the possibility of a new life one which is veiled in blind optimism. As Shaw notes:

> "Individual tragedy in Vor Sonnenaufgang is compounded by the fact that the love between Helen and Loth, the woman in need of redemption and the man who desires to redeem, never has a chance to prosper under present conditions."[19]

In this respect then, Helene's subsequent suicide is anticipated throughout the play. "Helenes Handeln, ihr Leiden und ihr Untergang sind hergeleitet aus den Faktoren Vererbung, Milieu und Erziehung."[20] Her actions are consistent, and she is well aware that any reference to her family's history will lead to the end of her relationship with Loth, the end of her hopes for escape from her environment, and logically the end of her existence. Edward McInnes notes, "Nor is it surprising that Helene, who is desperately keen to impress Loth, should be so concerned not to let him suspect that her father and her sister are dipsomaniacs."[21]

I. C. Helene's Relationship to Literature

In Vor Sonnenaufgang the trapped characters try to find some diversion from their desperate situations. The Krause family drinks, Kahl shoots pigeons, Frau Krause entertains Kahl, and Helene herself finds some relief in her garden

---

[19]Shaw, Witness of Deceit 42.

[20]Bellmann 32.

[21]Edward McInnes, German Social Drama 1840-1900: From Hebbel to Hauptmann (Stuttgart: Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1976) 124.

with her books (IV, 74). Helene's turn to Goethe points, however, to further patriarchal oppressiveness. The fate of Goethe's Werther parallels Helene's. Both seek suicide to relieve their irresolvable and desperate situations. Helene cannot break away from the old societal order which oppresses her. Likewise Loth discourages her from turning away from the old literary order represented by Goethe. Her interest in the new writings of modern authors Emile Zola and Henrik Ibsen demonstrates her wish to break from the old system, yet Loth leads her away from this interest.

> Helene: Genau das meinte die Stiefmutter, als sie mir vorgestern den Werther aus der Hand riß.
> Loth: Das ist ein dummes Buch.
> [...]
> Loth: Das sage ich nochmal, Fräulein. Es ist ein Buch für Schwächlinge.
> [...]
> Helene: [...] Vielleicht geben Sir mir Auskunft; man redet so viel von Zola und Ibsen in den Zeitungen: sind das große Dichter?
> Loth: Es sind gar keine Dichter, sondern notwendige Übel, Fräulein. Ich bin ehrlich durstig und verlange von der Dichtkunst einen klaren, erfrischenden Trunk.--Ich bin nicht krank. Was Zola und Ibsen bieten, ist Medizin.
> Helene: Ach, dann wäre es doch vielleicht für mich etwas (II, 46).

Poetological discourse serves to highlight Helene's plight--her incapability of breaking away from an oppressive patriarchal order is emphasized when Loth discourages her from breaking away from old literatures and exploring new ones. Her interest in revolutionary literature is left unnurtured, is discouraged, and she reverts to a desperate imitation of actions that an earlier literature glorified.

Even though Helene's interest in Ibsen and Zola is discouraged, her interest along theses lines at least shows an initiative that is unfortunately stifled by those around her.

I. D. Concluding Remarks

Although Helene's drive to escape ends in her death, her decision is a positive step. It reflects her ability to make a decision, however drastic, concerning the dire circumstances of her life. In this respect, Hauptmann's leading female must be seen in a positive light, and her actions viewed as revolutionary. Helene embodies a willingness to move toward change and rebellion, but her attempts are hindered by her milieu. We see an attempt at the positive portrayal of an emancipated woman, rather than the characterization of an ideal heroic woman. Helene attempts to free herself from the confines of her appalling environment, and in so doing drives home the destructive effect of adhering to the old order.

Hauptmann portrays a struggling leading female figure who tries to break free from her surroundings. Helene attempts to gain individual freedom and this takes a form of rebellion when this drive is suppressed. The entrapment of Helene Krause and her subsequent action to free herself from her situation may be compared and contrasted with Toni Selicke. The female lead in Holz and Schlaf's drama Die Familie Selicke--it appeared shortly after Vor

Sonnenaufgang--is likewise trapped in an existence that offers little opportunity for escape. Toni Selicke is a young woman incapable of freeing herself from the self-imposed obligations that bind her to her home and family. She is offered a chance at a new life as a pastor's wife, yet feels that she cannot accept his offer. Helene Krause, on the other hand, is clearly looking for a chance to escape her home environment, yet cannot obtain the means with which to do so.

To identify the major differences between the two female characters in these early Naturalist plays, one could determine that Helene's will to change her desperate situation via suicide overrides her will to remain living in a patriarchal, oppressed environment and thus is positive--i.e. it represents change. On the other hand when Toni Selicke's actions are viewed, she "decides" to remain with her poverty stricken family--i.e. this represents no change.[22] Arno Holz and Johannes Schlaf's play Die Familie Selicke offers a different view of a trapped woman, yet both plays offer realistic portrayals of different types of problems facing women at this time in history. Both dramas, with their use of poetological discourse, hinder sympathetic acceptance of these situations in favour of critical reflection on the need for change.

---

[22]See Kafitz 225-35; Müller-Salget 502-19; Whitinger, "Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Vor Sonnenaufgang'" 88.

II. Familie Selicke

On April 7, 1890 Holz's and Schlaf's play Die Familie Selicke opened on the Freie Bühne in Berlin. The play was a non-traditional presentation of family life, focusing on the suffering and misery of a family's hardship representative of late nineteenth century society. By dwelling on society's afflictions the play created an atmosphere of hostility and discontent and was embraced by neither critics nor contemporary playwrights.[23] Nonetheless Die Familie Selicke signalled the beginning of a revolutionary era in German theatre and literature, and the play's merits did not go unnoticed. Theatre critic and novelist Theodor Fontane recognized the achievements of Holz and Schlaf, saying in his 1890 review of the play: "Hier haben wir eigenlichstes Neuland. Hier scheiden sich die Wege, hier trennt sich alt und neu."[24]

Fontane's statements indicate the significant impact this play had on the Naturalist movement. The intent of drama, according to the theorist Holz, was to observe "[...] 'ein Stück Leben wie durch ein Fenster' [...]."[25] The various

---

[23]See Kafitz 226; Gerhard Schulz, Arno Holz. Dilemma eines bürgerlichen Dichterlebens (München: Beck, 1974) 59.

[24]Theodor Fontane, "Die Familie Selicke (1890)," Deutsche Literaturkritik. Von Heine bis Mehring (1830-1900), ed. Hans Mayer (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1976) 829.

[25]Arno Holz qtd. in Schulz, 59.

stylistic and dramatic techniques used in this play adhere to the tenets of Naturalist theory. "The Naturalists' basic concern for truth; [...] [and] the development of adequate techniques for the reproduction of truth or 'nature'"[26] were evident in the work of Holz and Schlaf. The depiction of all truths in this art form was Holz's chief concern. Wilhelm Emrich explains, "Unter 'Natur' verstand Arno Holz keineswegs nur die äußere uns umgebende Welt, sondern die gesamte geistige, seelische, gesellschaftliche und physische Wirklichkeit [...]."[27]

Toni Selicke represents the first of two types of women in the Naturalist plays discussed here. She is portrayed as both physically and psychologically trapped, illustrating the suffocating domestic situation of women in the nineteenth century. The play draws critical attention to relevant women's issues and concerns of the day demonstrating the necessity for emancipation.

Another important aspect of this play is its departure from conventional theatre, evident in a number of ways. Essentially, the tendency of audiences to feel compassion for Toni rests with the fact that despite hardship and misery she

---

[26]David Turner, "'Die Familie Selicke' and the Drama of Naturalism," Periods in German Literature, Volume II, Texts and Contexts, ed. J.M. Ritchie (London: Oswald Wolff, 1969) 209.

[27]Wilhelm Emrich, "Arno Holz und die moderne Kunst," Protest und Verheissung. Studien zur klassischen und modernen Dichtung (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1960) 156.

upholds traditional, moral and idealistic values. This inclination obstructs critical attention on the social issues and problems.[28] Holz and Schlaf attempt to draw attention to a range of social problems, in particular to the situation of young women. Often, however, the biases and habits of audiences and critics repeatedly obscure their view of the social problems on which a new play might be attempting to focus critical reflection. Yet a close reading of the text shows how, from early on, it invites readers or audiences to react sceptically to the sentimentality and idealism reminiscent of earlier poetry.

This chapter on The Familie Selicke will show that Toni Selicke is representative of a trapped, caged woman. Her portrayal is another example of failed emancipation, yet her characterization illustrates the necessity for emancipation. The aim of this non-traditional play is similar to that of Vor Sonnenaufgang: the audience is forced to recognize Toni's pathetic situation, and have sympathy with her. But Toni's problems are emphasized and the obstacles to change are depicted in such a way that the audience is not invited to accept her situation, but rather to reflect critically on its social implications. Once again the use of space and spatial imagery, also the motif of alcohol help to reveal her

---

[28]See Wilhelm Heinrich Pott, Literarische Produktivität. Untersuchungen zum ästhetischen Verfahren bei Arno Holz, Alfred Döblin, Bertolt Brecht und Alexander Kluge, European University Studies 758 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1984) 182.

predicament. The confining order of this domain is further emphasized with references to art which depict the woman in a servile role.

II. A. Toni's Entrapment

The play focuses on the suffering and misery experienced by the Selicke family. As David Turner notes, the "underlying threads" of the play are typically Naturalist: "As is so much of Naturalism, the keynote of Die Familie Selicke is suffering, coupled with pity for the victims."[29] Toni Selicke is the young twenty-two year-old woman who serves as the single connective factor in this disjointed family. She acts as the mediator between her drunken father and helpless mother, as well as the caretaker for her dying younger sister, Linchen.

Toni Selicke exists in an oppressive environment of misery. She is unable to break free from the cycle of poverty and despair which characterizes her family's existence. Even the prospect of escape from this abject misery, in the form of a marriage proposal of Theology student Gustav Wendt, is not enough to dissuade Toni from remaining with her parents.

Toni's inability to leave her family results from the triumph of milieu over individual free will. Dieter Kafitz explains that her decision does not entail the classic conflict between inclination and obligation but rather is

---

[29]Turner 194.

determined by an "internalisierte Rolle."[30] Toni pictures herself as the unifying centre of the family even though this internal role does not coincide with the real family situation portrayed. She feels she must take responsibility for the maintenance of harmony within the family--she protects her mother from the outbursts of her drunken father (II, 43-45) and she plays the mother-role with Linchen when her own mother fails to do so (II, 49).[31] Toni is living according to her inwardly imagined vision of her father as responsible, authoritative head of the house to whom she must be loyal while serving as the family's centre. This prevents her from seeing the possibility of flight or betterment.

Toni must sew to help make ends meet (I, 20), and the condition of her sister Linchen indicates that little money is available for medical treatment. Klaus Müller-Salget comments, "Trotzdem reicht das Geld offenbar kaum fürs Nötigste, vor allem nicht für eine ordentliche ärztliche Behandlung des schwindsüchtigen kleinen Linchens."[32] Furthermore, the meagre existence of the family is compounded by Father Selicke's drinking away the little money the family does possess. In these surroundings, we observe a woman

---

[30]Kafitz 235.

[31]Arno Holz and Johannes Schlaf, Die Familie Selicke. Drama in drei Aufzügen (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1966). All subsequent references will cite page numbers from this edition of the text.

[32]Müller-Salget 511.

trapped in her milieu as is Helene Krause. But unlike Helene, Toni Selicke is not capable of breaking the ties with her family and leaving the confines of her existence. She is not able to initiate the decisive step in order to change her situation. As Pott points out, "[...] Toni muß sich in die Macht der Umstände ergeben [...]."[33]

Space and spatial imagery are components which illustrate Toni's caged existence. The stage setting emphasizes confinement. The entire drama is focused in the Selicke's living room, where the pressures of everyday life unfold. Father Selicke's drunken condition, the mother's constant complaining, brother Albert's emotional outbursts and Linchen's sickly condition constitute the daily realities which Toni must contend with.

There is no escape for Toni, as she has taken it upon herself to mediate the tension within the household, providing no chance for her to leave the enclosed atmosphere of the impoverished home. The arrival of Gustav Wendt from the "free" world, outside the Selicke sphere, only intensifies the isolation of Toni's milieu. Wendt's offer to relieve Toni of this confinement is refused, as Toni feels she must persist in holding the family together. "Nein! Es ist ganz unmöglich, ganz unmöglich, daß ich fortkann!...Und--das kann noch lange, lange Jahre so fortdauern!" (III, 58)

---

[33]Pott 180-81.

As is the case in most situations involving poverty and family problems, Toni is caught in a cycle of cause and effect over which she has no control. One may speak of her lack of desire to change her situation, but seen within the confines of her patriarchal, oppressive home and poverty-stricken environment Toni's ability to make a decision is overshadowed by her notions of family unity and authority. Toni's decision to remain at home is not motivated by feelings of love for her family, but rather the feeling that she is bound to the home through beliefs of a perceived authority.[34]

Patriarchal aggressiveness dominates the Selicke household, and this power is an important factor for Toni's actions. In these surroundings tensions are high at the prospect of the father's arrival (II, 43), and lend to an atmosphere "wo sich die Menschen eingesperrt fühlen und Aggresivität entwickeln."[35] Moreover, the family's existence has evidently worsened with time, as references are made by Father Selicke to actions in the past that have caused him great regret. Almost always in a state of inebriation in the home, he bemoans his marriage and the troubles it has caused him (II, 48). His love for his children (II, 49), however, especially Linchen (II, 47), is not to be disputed. Once

---

[34]cf. Müller-Salget 514 and Whitinger, "Art Works and Artistic Activity" 146.

[35]Helmut Scheuer, Arno Holz im literarischen Leben des ausgehenden 19. Jahrhunderts (1883-1896). Eine biographische Studie (München: Winkler, 1971) 80.

employed in a respectable position as a bookkeeper, economic hardship is evident. Kafitz notes, "Drohende Arbeitslosigkeit und wirtschaftliche Unsicherheit des Arbeiters erzeugen Mißstimmung und Verbitterung, die sich zunächst im häuslichen Leben niederschlagen [...]."[36] These tensions drive members of the family ultimately to various diversions,

> "Der Vater findet seinen Ausweg im Alkohol, der auch eine Traumwelt mit sich bringt, die Mutter in ihrem Selbstmitleid, aus dem sie gar nicht mehr will [...]."[37]

When Toni's oppressive domestic environment is examined, a clear motive for the rejection of Wendt's proposal is, at first glance, difficult to comprehend. It is these flights into activities far removed from the squalor of every day life that enable the family members to escape momentarily from their misery, flights in which Toni also participates, through her diary, for example. Her position as care-giver for her younger sister and intermediary for her parents serves to entrench her further in a role which she perceives as vital for the survival of the family. She is therefore subject to extreme mental anguish, because real-life burdens fall upon her, while the rest of the family briefly escape the realities

---

[36]Kafitz 234.

[37]Cowen, Der Naturalismus 180.

of life. "[Toni is] a person who almost heroically assumes a burden of responsibility for the lives of others [...]."[38]

II. B. Toni's Prospect of Freedom

Under such circumstances Gustav Wendt's offer of a life as a future pastor's wife would appear to be a precious chance at escape. But Toni staunchly defends her parents and cannot consider Wendt's offer. The extended exposure to her miserable surroundings renders a break from them impossible, as Toni has been conditioned to believe that her presence with her family is more important than her personal happiness.

> Wendt: Hast du denn gar kein Bedürfnis nach Glück! Ich...ich meine: hast du denn nicht manchmal den Wunsch gehabt, hier wegzukommen, in ruhige, schöne Verhältnisse? [...] Tag für Tag! all das Elend hier vor Augen hast? Wie? (I, 26)
> Toni: Oh, wie können Sie nur so von Vater und Mutter sprechen! Sie sind beide so gut! (I, 27)

Interestingly enough, it is this offer for which Hauptmann's Helene Krause so desperately hopes; yet Toni Selicke turns it down. Although Toni is clearly unhappy with her existence, she never seriously considers the real possibility of emancipation or flight. As she explains to Wendt, she loves her parents too dearly to ever "desert" them in their present situation. She is convinced that her family is a working unit and that her role is central to the functioning of the unit.

Her constant references to her feelings of obligation to her family, coupled with her convictions that her parents are themselves victims of circumstance, serve to warn us that her

---

[38]Turner 197.

ultimate decision is inevitable: "Und wenn sie noch schlecht wären!...Sie sind aber so gut! Alle beide! Ich habe sie ja so lieb!" (III, 58) Roy C. Cowen says of this statement: "Selbstverständlich müssen wir in Tonis Worten das Fundament für ihren späteren Verzicht auf ein selbstsüchtig glückliches Leben erkennen."[39]

In contrast to Helene Krause, she is incapable of making the initial step towards freedom, due to a sense of duty to her family. As Fritz Martini points out:

> "Es gibt hier keine Freiheit von Selbstentscheidungen, nur eine klägliche Eingebundenheit, und wo, wie bei Toni, die Möglichkeit zu einer eigenen inneren Entscheidung angezeigt wird, dient sie nur der Erkenntnis der Unfreiheit, nämlich ihrer Einsicht, ihre Eltern und Brüder nicht verlassen zu dürfen."[40]

Because her sense of duty towards her parents and family outweighs the chance she may have for self happiness, she remains in the home to carry on further. "Siehst du!...Du mußt doch sehn, daß ich jetzt--hier--nicht fortkann! [...] Ich kann, ich kann doch nicht anders!" (III, 57) She is not capable of breaking with ties that bind her to her desperate existence. She exclaims on several occasions that she wants to die (III, 57), but her will is not strong enough to carry out this act, as is the case with Helene Krause.

---

[39]Cowen, Der Naturalismus 175.

[40]Fritz Martini, Nachwort, Die Familie Selicke, by Arno Holz and Johannes Schlaf (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1966) 72.

II. C. Toni's Relationship to Art

Toni's existence is further characterized by references to unsophisticated art works which appear in the opening stage directions as well as in certain points in the play. The social order which traps her within the confines of her home is reinforced in the art works which are described at the beginning of the play.

> "Die Rückwand nimmmt ein altes, schwerfälliges, großgeblumtes Sofa ein, über welchem zwischen zwei kleinen, vergilbten Gipsstatuetten 'Schiller und Goethe' der bekannte Kaulbachsche Stahlstich 'Lotte, Brot schneidend' hängt" (I,5).

The imposing presence of the great patriarchs of German literature which surround the picture of Lotte serve to illustrate Toni's situation. The picture is embraced and protected, resembling Toni's caring instincts towards her family. Kafitz notes: "Der Hintergrund signalisiert die geistige und soziale Herkunft [...]."[41] What is emphasized to Toni through the reinforcement of the Lotte picture is clear: her position within the family is to nurture everyone but herself. Her individual happiness and contentment are secondary to her imagined duty toward her family, and this inherent attitude fostered by an oppressive patriarchal society prevents Toni from experiencing happiness. The message found in the crass art works is clear: "[...] noch im

---

[41]Kafitz 232.

gesamten 19. Jahrhundert ist das Rollenbild der Frau durch ihre Aufgabe als häusliche Wirtschafterin festgelegt."[42]

II. D. Concluding Remarks

In the figure of Toni Selicke, we observe a trapped young female; a woman bound to her home because of a sense of obligation that is represented in the oppressive patriarchal surroundings of the home and further demonstrated by her relationship to art works. She is incapable of making the decision to break away from "der Brutalität des Alltags"[43] to forge a better life for herself with Gustav Wendt. The outcome of The Familie Selicke reflects the Naturalist view of people as products of their environment. Unlike Helene Krause and Ibsen's Nora Helmer, Toni Selicke is not capable of rebellion or change. Rather she is a product of her times:

> "He [naturalist "man"] appeared rather as a product of heredity and environment, physical, social, intellectual and spiritual; and ultimately he could not escape from this self which had been molded by so many forces outside him."[44]

Die Familie Selicke and Gerhart Hauptmann's Vor Sonnenaufgang were performed within months of each other. While the portrayal of trapped leading female characters is similar, their outcomes are markedly different. Hauptmann's Helene Krause breaks free from her repressive circumstances by

---

[42]Kafitz 233.

[43]Pott 182.

[44]Turner 194.

committing suicide, after an initial promise of certain freedom has been betrayed. Toni Selicke, on the other hand, rejects possibility of freedom and a better life, and remains with her poverty-stricken family.

Holz and Schlaf succeed in drawing attention to existing social problems of the late nineteenth century. Their move away from emotional identification with a single male heroic figure, and to the depiction of relevant social questions, effectively provides the environment for a critical examination of a variety of issues, including the portrayal of women. The representation of a trapped woman in Die Familie Selicke provides the framework for further advancement of women's issues in dramatic presentation. Gerhart Hauptmann's Helene Krause is likewise a trapped woman, but she advances a step further as she takes control of her destiny.

Chapter Two

The Emancipated Women - The Later Plays

Gerhart Hauptmann's drama Einsame Menschen and Hermann Sudermann's play Heimat shift away from the depiction of oppressed women as seen in earlier Naturalist plays. They portray emancipated women who, despite their involvement in conflicts, display strength. With this change these writers become still more emphatic in their belief in the positive possibilities of emancipation despite the real complexities and pain involved in such change.

The portrayals of Anna Mahr in Einsame Menschen and Magda Schwartze in Heimat show these women to have strength, vitality and courage. Their strength also affects other women in the respective plays, fostering growth in them which must be attributed to the presence of the emancipated women.

Finally, these plays combine their social and poetological themes much as do the two plays just discussed, with the relationships of the prominent female figures to poetry and art reflecting their relationship to prevailing social traditions and conventions. While the earlier plays depicted the trapped females adhering to illusory ideals glorified in the poetry of an earlier age, these later plays present emancipated women who, while breaking away from old social orders, are also involved in approaches to poetry and

art that go against prevailing conventions. Toni Selicke's inability to break out of her illusory role as the domestic centre, for example, is reflected in her relationship to the household's artistic decor. Similarly, Anna Mahr in Einsame Menschen represents a woman who has broken free of conventional roles, and is also part of scenes that question prevailing literary convention.

I. Einsame Menschen

Hauptmann's third drama Einsame Menschen (1891) introduced a revolutionary type of woman to the German stage. Even those with reservations about Gerhart Hauptmann's commitment to the women's cause admit this. For example, Linda Schelbitzki Pickle says: "The greatest of the Naturalist playwrights, Gerhart Hauptmann, came closest to putting a positive bourgeois emancipated woman on stage."[45] The leading female figure in this drama travels alone (I, 186), is a university student (I, 186) and has definite opinions about the suppressed situation of modern-day women (II, 198). Anna Mahr represents trends evident in the women's movement of the day, but the presentation of such a woman as a figure in a drama is unprecedented. Ursula Münchow explains the relevance of this female character for German literature:

> "In der Studentin Anna Mahr bringt Gerhart Hauptmann eine neuartige Frauengestalt auf die Bühne, die sich, bei aller Weiblichkeit und Tiefe des Empfindens, ganz auf sich selbst gestellt bewährt, die ethischen und sozialen Übel der Zeit erkennt und bekämpft [...]."[46]

Anna Mahr is unconventional in many respects, and brings forth a new and positive image of women in late nineteenth century Germany. The twenty-four year old Zürich student from

---

[45]Linda Schelbitzki Pickle, "Self-Contradictions in the German Naturalists' View of Women's Emancipation," The German Quarterly 4 (1979) : 450.

[46]Ursula Münchow, Deutscher Naturalismus (Berlin: Akademie, 1968) 97.

Reval represents the forces of change and freedom. Yet a number of critical issues surround the portrayal, and above all the reception of Anna Mahr by various critics since the play's appearance. I propose that Anna Mahr is an essentially positive character who embodies the ideals of a late nineteenth century emancipated woman, without being the perfect image of a singularly positive, heroic figure. She espouses positive principles of women's emancipation, while the portrayal of her interaction with existing orders gives a realistic picture of problems necessarily connected with change.

There are several points of debate regarding the reception and interpretation of the Anna Mahr figure and her influence on other characters in the play. First, early recipients and even recent critics fostered the notion that the play centres on Johannes Vockerat, thus inviting emotional identification with his "tragedy". But in fact Anna's role in Johannes's "downfall" serves to draw attention away from this tendency to emotional identification with Johannes and toward the various problems which effect the collective group. Second, many critics still conclude that Hauptmann is anti-feminist because Anna Mahr is not a triumphant heroine free of faults. But in fact complex facets of her character point to a relatively positive figure rather than to the negative image perceived by many feminist critics. Lastly, critics have often seen Käthe Vockerat as a helpless weak figure whose life

is ruined by Anna's intrusion. Yet evidence of Käthe's growth at the end of the play speaks for the positive portrayal of both Anna and Käthe.

I. A. Dramatic Presentation of Heroic Figures

Critics often overlook the importance of the two female figures, Anna and Käthe, emphasizing instead how they serve the portrayal of the leading male figure, Johannes Vockerat, and his problems.[47] Michaela Giesing represents this trend in criticism when she remarks,

> "Der kleinbürgerliche Intellektuelle, der die Rolle des Familienvaters und -ernährers nicht mehr spielen kann, lud zur Identifikation, nicht zur Analyse, ein."[48]

The individual traits, accomplishments and strengths of Käthe and Anna are often neglected. Naomi Stephan, for example, says, "Ihre [Annas] dramatische Relevanz liegt in ihrer Funktion, Johannes' Dilemma zu beleuchten; [...]."[49] Critics and readers often disregard the importance and complexity of the two young women because they approach the play with traditional assumptions and expectations regarding a male playwright's portrayal of male heroes.

---

[47]See for example, McInnes German Social Drama 199; Uland Fehlau, "Another Look at Hauptmann's 'Einsame Menschen,'" Monatshefte 42 (1950) : 409-13; Leroy R. Shaw, "The Strategy of Compassion. Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Einsame Menschen,'" The Playwright & Historical Change. Dramatic Strategies in Brecht, Hauptmann, Kaiser & Wedekind (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1970) 30-34.

[48]Giesing 195.

[49]Stephan 199.

A similar criticism is levelled at Vor Sonnenaufgang because it appears to focus on Alfred Loth as a "dramatic hero" and relegates Helene and the miners to the periphery.[50] The move away from identification with a heroic figure once again underlines an important, though often neglected aspect of Naturalist drama--to avert attention away from a single ideal character and towards a realistic representation of modern society. Ruth Gilg-Ludwig states that, "Heroismus ist eine Möglichkeit, die der naturalistische Künstler im Vorsatz und Werk verneint [...]."[51]

A closer look at the text supports a revision of these views: the play does not focus on Johannes, nor does it offer a sympathetic portrayal of him that fosters identification and hinders "analysis." While Johannes's dilemma is an important element in the play, he is not the central figure around whom all action revolves. Anna is more than just a visitor who passes over the stage.[52] She is more than just a secondary character whose presence is used to emphasize Johannes's self-determined misery, contrary to the view of Edward McInnes:

> "But the primary importance of this situation in the life of the hero lies in the fact that

---

[50]W.A. Coupe, "An Ambiguous Hero: In Defence of Alfred Loth," German Life and Letters 31 (1977/78) : 13-22.

[51]Ruth Gilg-Ludwig, "Die internationalen Aspekte des deutschen Naturalismus Heroismus und Emanzipation bei G. Hauptmann," Actes du Ve congrés de l'Association internationale de littérature comparée (..., 1969) 266.

[52]See Pascal 209.

> it brings about the disruption of his deep ties with his wife and family."[53]

These suppositions overlook the importance of Anna's role as an independent character, thus hindering perception of the emancipatory trends that are evident in the play.

The title supports the view that Hauptmann did not intend the emphasis on a lone heroic male. He changed the name of the play from the working title Das Wunderkind to the more widely encompassing Einsame Menschen. The dedication of the play in the first "Einzelausgabe" also implies a collective rather than any singular emphasis. "Ich lege dies Drama in die Hände derjenigen, die es gelebt haben" (168). While this quote refers to Hauptmann's brother Carl, the use of the plural rather than the singular indicates a concern with more than one central, suffering hero.

Critics who focus on Johannes's ultimate downfall and who sympathize with the hero's dilemma have tended to attribute his catastrophe to the presence of Anna Mahr, once again focusing on Johannes as the singularly important figure, and relegating Anna to a mere instrument in his demise. Yet an examination of Anna's actions reveals some degree of intelligent reasoning and compassionate understanding. She is not responsible for Johannes's downfall. She helps to direct attention away from sympathetic inclinations for Johannes and

---

[53]Edward McInnes, "The Domestic Dramas of Gerhart Hauptmann: Tragedy or Sentimental Pathos?," German Life and Letters 20 (1966) : 54.

focus on other issues. Sympathetic identification with the leading male becomes less relevant, even when the play ends with Johannes's probable suicide. Due to Anna's short but significant interval in Johannes's life, he has experienced a spiritual uplift.

Johannes and Anna begin as intellectual companions and prove themselves capable of leading a friendship as unconventional as their lives. Intellectually compatible, they initially feel that this base is enough to lift them above the temptations of infidelity, and prevent "a relapse into lowly convention."[54] Their intellectual common ground enables Johannes to enjoy the company of an understanding and compassionate companion, without being burdened with the trivialities of every-day life, which he finds represented by his wife Käthe. "Anna, by contrast, is always the understanding, never the demanding, partner [...]."[55]

While the onset of the friendship does not preclude the danger of romantic involvement, the closing dialogue between Johannes and Anna indicates that their friendship has developed into something much deeper (V, 251-54). Johannes insists throughout the course of the play that his feelings for Anna are purely those of friendship (III, 229), but

---

[54]Gerhard Baumgaertel, "Gerhart Hauptmann's Theme of 'Engagement Manqué' in the Critical Treatment of His Early Characters," Revue des langues vivantes 30 (1964) : 320.

[55]John Osborne, The Naturalist Drama in Germany (Manchester: Manchester UP Rowman and Littlefield, 1971) 114.

allusions to the formation of an ideal situation whereby he, Anna and Käthe could live in harmony (IV, 240) clearly indicate that his friendship has taken on just as significant a role as his marriage. Johannes wishes to have his wife as well as the intellectual companionship with Anna (IV, 239-40). In addition, he is drawn to Anna sexually (V, 90) but denies this attraction throughout the play, insisting that his feelings for Anna are purely platonic (III, 65).

As the plot develops, Johannes's determination to achieve his ideal becomes firmly entrenched in his plans for the future, as it is the only way he feels that he can go on living. His ultimate downfall is brought about by the realization that the ideal that he has formed in his own mind will never be realized. As Philip Mellen sums up, "The moment Anna leaves [...] his fate is decided, for he is too weak to live with a mere ideal."[56]

Anna realizes the extent to which the friendship has bloomed, as well as its effect on the Vockerat family. She remarks to Käthe: "Mama Vockerat sieht mich auch nicht mehr gern" (III, 219). While Anna also initially strives for a partnership based upon friendship and intellectual common ground, she is the first to see that their friendship is much more than this, once more indicating that she is a more sensitive and insightful figure than some critics believe.

---

[56]Philip Mellen, "Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Einsame Menschen': Christ in Crisis," Germanic Notes 11 (1980) : 44.

The ideal is not to be realized, and her decision to leave the family is proof of her awareness of the danger which an extended presence could have. L.B. Keefer indicates:

> "Side by side they will walk new paths, never as yet trodden, discover new vistas, never as yet envisaged by man. But the ideal is not to be achieved. Anna, almost too rational and doctrinaire, is the first to realize it."[57]

Anna's decision to depart and to put an end to the relationship (V, 253) is decisive. Johannes's inclinations are initially towards a continuation of the friendship (V, 253). Anna's departure is indicative of her insight and sensitivity--she realizes the impossibility of continuing their friendship. As Osborne says, "Anna is quicker to perceive the truth, and to remind Johannes that they are both prone to the same human desires as everybody else."[58]

With the final act it is evident to Johannes that the friendship, if continued, would go beyond a platonic, intellectual companionship. Thus it is incorrect and short-sighted to assume that Anna is to blame either for the destruction of the family bond or for Johannes's outcome. Rather, Einsame Menschen points to a clashing of ideals and expectations from the old and the new order which lead to the demise of a man already on the brink of emotional and spiritual collapse in his stifling environment. This

---

[57]L.B. Keefer, "Woman's Mission in Hauptmann's Dramas," The Germanic Review 9 (1934) : 39.

[58]Osborne 112.

situation existed long before the arrival of Anna Mahr. Anna is not the cause for Johannes's death--she merely confirms his unhappy existence.

The suicide attempt at the end is a result of Johannes's inability to accept that his ideal cannot be realized. He has experienced the true intellectual companionship and understanding that he sought. This positive force has been abruptly removed from his life, and the devastation is more than he can bear. Yet sympathy with his dilemma is not the ultimate goal. His fate is an expression of sorrows in his life that were festering long before the arrival of Anna Mahr. His inability to do without Anna's presence serves only to heighten his disillusionment and drive him to complete an act that represents many years of frustration and unhappiness.

I. B. The Portrayal of a Complex Character

The portrayal of Anna Mahr is not an expression of Hauptmann's misgivings or negative views about emancipation, as some recent feminist critics claim.[59] Representative of this view is Jenny Hortenbach who states, "Indem Hauptmann ein so negatives Bild einer Emanzipierten entwirft, spricht auch er [...] ein vernichtendes Urteil über die Frauenemanzipation aus."[60] Nor is Hauptmann "deeply ambivalent"[61] as suggested by Gail Finney. I propose instead that Hauptmann's

---

[59]See Allan; Giesing; Pickle; Schroeder; Stephan.

[60]Hortenbach 106.

[61]Finney 13.

characterization of Anna Mahr reflects the reality of the women's situation in 1891. The complexities and inconsistencies that many note in her portrayal do not represent a condemnation of women's emancipation. Hauptmann's Naturalist drama portrays this reality with its many complex issues that accompany any revolutionary action.

In previous Naturalist plays, leading women figures such as Toni Selicke in Familie Selicke and Helene Krause in Vor Sonnenaufgang were trapped within the confines of their milieu. Anna Mahr represents a definite break from this tradition because the figure is the product of "pre-play" change and rebellion which has culminated in the end-product of personal freedom (i.e. study and travel). In this respect Anna illustrates a progression from Helene Krause and Toni Selicke, who remain confined.

Anna Mahr arrives in Friedrichshagen, near Berlin, to visit an acquaintance, Braun, before returning to her studies in Zürich. Anna's lifestyle would be considered unorthodox when compared to women's behaviour of Hauptmann's day. As a university student, she is breaking new ground in an area not open to women in Germany until after the turn of the century. Mama Vockerat's response to this revelation would be a typical reflection of the attitudes of the time:

> Frau Vockerat: Ach ja! die schöne Schweiz!--
> Sie haben gewiß Verwandte in Zürich.
> Fräulein Anna: Nein--ich studiere.
> Frau Vockerat: Sie...an der Universität?
> Fräulein Anna: An der Universität.

> Frau Vockerat: Das ist wohl nicht möglich! Also Studentin sind Sie?! Was Sie sagen! Das ist ja höchst interessant!--Also wirklich Studentin? (I, 186)

Anna arrives dressed in black (I, 185), hence showing her unconventionality through solidarity with fellow female students. Her black dress is not simply a defiance of the traditional order but rather an indication that she is one of the small number of women who went abroad to study despite Germany's restrictions concerning the status of women at universities in the late nineteenth century. Margaret Sinden notes that black apparel was quite common among female students at this time.[62]

Some critics have taken a negative view of Anna as a scheming woman who destroys the peaceful harmony of a bourgeois family.[63] Such assertions would support the premise that Hauptmann viewed emancipation negatively. Günther Mahal, for example, claims,

> "Anna Mahr trat als bereits Emanzipierte auf, als Wesen von Selbständigkeit und Ungebundenheit, das 'aus der Fremde' [...] in eine Familie einbricht und diese vollends vernichtet."[64]

Yet the opening scenes contradict that view. They indicate that problems between Johannes and Käthe precede Anna's arrival, and they suggest something other than invasion. Frau

---

[62]Margaret Sinden, "'Marianne' and 'Einsame Menschen,'" Monatshefte 54 (1962): 312.

[63]See Hortenbach 91.

[64]Günther Mahal, Naturalismus (München: Fink, 1975) 132.

Vockerat's assurances concerning the birth of Philip indicate that the marriage is already on rocky ground. Käthe is already experiencing tensions in the marriage, while Johannes is at odds with tradition.

As the play progresses, it is evident that the troubles within the marriage are neither trivial nor short term. Johannes's dissatisfaction with his family environment is deep-rooted. His advanced intellectual pursuits leave him alone with his work, and he believes no one understands him. Moreover, Johannes does not adhere to his parent's religion, setting the stage for tension-filled relationships. It would stand to reason then, that the "peacefulness" that some critics perceive is not present at all. Anna Mahr enters this environment and brings feelings and emotions to the surface that have lain dormant for years and in essence "crystallized" over time.[65]

Once the tensions between Johannes and his family are revealed, they erupt with a forcefulness which indicates their long dormancy. Moreover, the scenes pointing to a less than ideal situation within Käthe and Johannes's marriage are verified by the ensuing actions of the characters. E.M. Batley summarizes this phenomenon:

> "Similarly, [...], Anna Mahr's arrival can be taken as the introduction of a foreign body which causes all other elements in the

---

[65]Baumgaertel 320.

> family and near-family environment to react in a virtually predetermined manner."[66]

As a young woman without family ties it is only natural that Anna would feel a sense of security amongst the Vockerats. She is not only portrayed as a strong individual, but also characterized as a lonely woman without a fatherland or any family ties (III, 220). The English translation of the title of the play, Lonely Lives, alludes to her position among the collective group in Friedrichshagen--"She is another 'lonely' person."[67] A consideration of Anna's loneliness on several levels leads to a better understanding of her less-than-conventional "motives" and behaviour.

Anna is estranged from her homeland, and it is only natural that she would seek to remain in an environment which is family-oriented and close-knit. Anna remarks to Frau Vockerat, "Und daß man so glücklich sein kann in einer Familie! Mir ist eben so was ganz fremd gewesen bis jetzt" (II, 195). Frau Vockerat initially expresses her fondness for Anna (II, 194-95), fostering a feeling of warmth and belonging in Anna towards other family members. This acceptance prompts Anna to seek further solace in the family, and she asks Frau Vockerat if she may address her as "Mama" (II, 194-95). Her desire to remain at the home on the Müggelsee, when it is

---

[66]E.M. Batley, "Functional Idealism in Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Einsame Menschen': An Interpretation," German Life and Letters 23 (1970) : 250.

[67]Baumgaertel 320.

obvious that she must depart, is driven by her sense of security within the family environment as much as by her relationship with Johannes (III, 218). John Osborne sums up her situation and the reasons for her unconventional behaviour as follows:

> "Her hardness [...] is a mask, a defence against suffering. She is sensitive and lonely; a homeless young girl, with a cosmopolitan background, forced to make her own way in a world which looks with suspicion on self-reliant women, and so forced to toughen herself for the sake of bare survival."[68]

Negative judgments of Anna Mahr in secondary literature also centre around the perception of Hauptmann's misgivings concerning emancipated women. These critics ultimately criticize the author for not creating a woman who lives up to the modern-day expectations of an enlightened woman. Feminist-based secondary literature has discounted the important function of Anna Mahr, and has found Hauptmann incapable of presenting a positive emancipated woman despite assumed "intentions."[69] The complexity of the Anna Mahr character, however, would indicate that Hauptmann's intention was not to create a perfectly positive or heroic figure, but rather subject audiences to the issue of emancipation and the changing role of women.

I propose that a complex picture of the Anna Mahr figure emerges. Her motives, actions and ideas are not always

---

[68]Osborne 110.

[69]Allan 165; Schroeder 126.

consistent, nor do they represent present day expectations of an ideal emancipated woman. Once again it is important to keep in mind the relative progressiveness of her actions compared to the realistic situation of women at the turn of the century. The depiction of Anna Mahr as complex helps Hauptmann to invite readers or audiences to reflect critically on problems depicted.

Much of the criticism concludes that Anna is "eindeutig"[70] because she is examined under the premise that her inconsistencies and unconventional behaviour are purely negative traits. The complexity of her character would, in my opinion, call for a more positive assessment. Osborne summarizes the recent criticism as follows:

> "It has been suggested that Anna [...] also contributes to Johannes' destruction by fighting for possession of him; that she is a tough, scheming, emancipated woman, [...]; but Anna is surely a more sympathetic and more complex character."[71]

Hauptmann is not averse to the women's cause, as Lorelei Allan proposes[72], but rather is once again raising the reader's and audience's consciousness concerning the complexity of issues revolving around women's emancipation. He has not "created a strong, positive 'Emanzipierte' in spite

---

[70]Ernst Feise, "Hauptmanns 'Einsame Menschen' und Ibsens 'Rosmersholm.' Zugleich ein Beitrag zum Verständnis des naturalistischen Dramas," The Germanic Review 10 (1935) : 152.

[71]Osborne 109.

[72]Allan 161.

of himself,"[73] but rather used this unusual portrayal of women to obtain objectivity regarding developing issues whose far-reaching implications are as of 1891 still largely unknown. Moreover, the critical distance Hauptmann achieves enables him to introduce pressing social issues, thus shifting the focus away from one male heroic figure and the audience's tendency to identify with that character.

The portrayal of Anna Mahr leaves some unanswered questions about her controversial behaviour and possible motives, but these inconsistencies serve to make the reader or audience think about complexities relevant to women's issues in the nineteenth century. Contrary to Stephan's claim that "sie uns keinen positiven Einblick in das Leben einer emanzipierten Frau [gibt],"[74] her portrayal does give the reader and audience a view into such a contentious issue. The play emphasizes the complexities of a late nineteenth century woman, yet still offers a positive and advanced depiction of women.

Pickle and Stephan sum up these difficulties with the Anna Mahr character, though they intended their comments as negative statements. Pickle states that "she is not a fully developed character,"[75] while Stephan notes: "Anna Mahr wird in der Kritik häufig als widersprüchliche, rätselhafte Figur

---

[73]Allan 173.

[74]Stephan 194.

[75]Pickle 450.

gesehen."[76] Both statements are however correct in so far as they capture the complexities on which Hauptmann focuses.

Most negative responses centre around Anna's perceived self-centredness, egotism and lack of concern for others. Although Schroeder claims that "Since Anna's only concern is herself, she is not aware of Johannes' agony,"[77] this statement is not substantiated in the play. Anna decides to leave the Vockerat family (III, 216), even though she is happy there, at least in part, because she is clearly aware of the pain she is causing to both Johannes and his family. Her initial departure means that she must leave the warmth of a family and a relationship of intellectual companionship to face eight lonely days in Zürich before the beginning of the semester at university (III, 220). Anna is aware, however, of the fragile state of the family unit, but she is drawn by other needs--such as family warmth and intellectual companionship--to remain with the Vockerats.

Once again, Anna's slightly unconventional and assertive behaviour is mistaken for rudeness and arrogance. Her discussion with Johannes in Act IV refutes claims that she is unaware of unrest within the family. As Anna's friendship with Johannes strengthens and her awareness of the source of his discontent becomes evident, she realizes that a continued relationship with Johannes would further damage the already

---

[76]Stephan 193.

[77]Schroeder 129.

fragile family ties. She knows the dangers of a continuation of the friendship, as well as the desperate solution proposed by Johannes in the fourth act. When asked whether Anna could live with the couple as an intellectual companion for Johannes, she replies: "Wenn es Käthe gelänge--zu leben--neben mir, dann...dann würde ich mir selbst doch nicht trauen können" (IV, 240).

It is clear that Hauptmann's depiction of an emancipated woman is not the epitome of an ideal heroic figure. The portrayal of Anna Mahr is complex, yet realistic with respect to a complete picture of an enlightened woman in 1891. More than presenting his audience with the ultimate embodiment of an liberated woman, Hauptmann seems to be providing his readers with a realistic situation, inviting further critical reflection and analysis.

The manner in which Anna relates to art also speaks in favour of a positive assessment of her character. In the second act, Braun comes to the Vockerat home with a newly printed copy of the story "Die Künstler" by Russian writer W. M. Garschin. The story deals with two artists: Rjäbinin gives up painting and becomes a teacher; Djedow gives up his job as an engineer and becomes a painter. Anna refers to Rjäbinin as a "denkender Künstler" and to Djedow as a "naiver" (II, 201). She has already read the story and is able to converse intelligently about the characters and their plights (II, 202), especially about Rjäbinin who believes it is

important to be engaged in a useful, practical occupation. She contemplates the growth that Rjäbinin experiences in his idealistic notions about artists and suffering:

> "In Rjäbinin zum Beispiel, da wächst auch was Neues. Er sagt sich: solange noch solches Elend existiere, sei es ein Verbrechen, irgend etwas anderes zu tun, was nicht unmittelbar darauf abzielt, diesem Elend zu steuern" (II, 202).

Johannes and Braun, on the other hand, ponder which artist they can best relate to, unable to act beyond their tendency towards hero identification.

Sigfrid Hoefert points out that the reference to Garschin in the 1891 stage production of Einsame Menschen would have been relevant and current to the audience, as many were pondering the relevance of the artist in a modern, evolving society. "[...] die Rede auf Garschins 'Die Künstler' [...] muss für die Zuschauer höchst aktuell gewesen sein."[78] Anna's interest in modern literature and her ability to relate to contemporary artists' problems is due to her situation as a modern woman in a world which also struggles to identify the place of a "ground-breaker" in society.

I. C. Emotional Growth of an Unemancipated Woman

Finally, Anna may be contrasted with Käthe Vockerat to show how the traditional role of women is affected by emancipatory trends. Comparison brings to light the problems and issues facing both the traditional, dissatisfied housewife

---

[78]Sigfrid Hoefert, "Aufnahme und Wirkung W.M. Garschins im deutschen Sprachraum--Besonders im Hinblick auf Gerhart Hauptmann," Michigan Germanic Studies 1 (1975) : 247.

(Käthe) and the new emancipated woman (Anna). Käthe's role may be compared to Anna's in order to gain insight into the problems facing young women trapped within the patriarchal social order, although the framework for analysis for Käthe Vockerat must be kept within the context of her position with the family as a trapped woman.

Analysis of Käthe uncovers strengths that are apparent despite her oppressed existence. Some critics condemn Anna's relationship with Käthe because of her lack of consideration and insight into Käthe's feelings.[79] Others claim that Anna uses Käthe to further her own cause with Johannes. Lorelei Allan, for example, claims that, "Although Anna seems to befriend Käthe by opening her eyes to women's overall oppression in society, she is actually using Käthe to win Johannes for herself."[80] Yet I suggest that Anna's effect on Käthe is essentially positive. It shows how the potential for further emancipation does exist for Käthe--she proves that she is interested in various women's issues, and on more than one occasion challenges her mother-in-law's traditional opinions. She is not a weak figure who goes "innerlich [...] zugrunde."[81] Rather, her maturity can be clearly traced throughout the course of the drama.

---

[79]Schroeder 128; Hortenbach 93-95.

[80]Allan 168.

[81]Hortenbach 40.

Often dismissed as intellectually inferior to her husband, Käthe provides the best example of personal growth and maturity in Einsame Menschen. She is molded by her family into a figure who is insecure and emotionally distraught. Family members offer her little support, and contribute to her perceived status as an ailing, frail and intellectually inferior character. Her actions do not imply lack of intelligence, but rather reflect the subservient role which has been forced upon her by her husband and family. She has become the diminutive non-person "Käthemiezel" that the family has created.

The young mother finds herself in a situation where she is patronized and degraded by every character in the play. The list of diminutives includes "Käthchen," "Käthel," "Käthemiezel," "Kindel," "dummes Käthchen," and "Närrchen." Frau Vockerat treats Käthe like a child, sending her to bed (IV, 233) or offering to read her Grimms' fairy-tales (V, 257) so that Käthe need not deal with problems. Serious problems are covered up, presumably in Käthe's best interest. For example, Frau Vockerat reassures her that her marriage troubles will disappear now that Käthe and Johannes have had a son, yet Käthe instinctively feels that there are further problems beneath this surface (I, 172-73). The young insecure woman needs Frau Vockerat's valuable experience as a mother and wife but no one is willing to help Käthe deal with her problems in a mature manner.

The constant patronizing by members of the family indicates either that Käthe's plight is not taken seriously, or that they simply do not think Käthe is capable of dealing with complex emotional matters.

Käthe's husband, Johannes, is most responsible for his wife's situation. He is selfish, egotistical and incapable of seeing beyond his own problems to experience compassion for his wife. He insists that Käthe take advantage of Anna's visit to develop herself intellectually (I, 193). Yet at the same time Johannes never misses an opportunity to prevent this from happening. He belittles his wife because of her inability to appreciate his work (II, 209), and verbalizes his wife's short-comings while providing no support for improvement.

Although exchanges between the two women are not numerous in the play, there are indications that serious conversations have taken place away from the immediate action of the play. The on-stage interaction between the two indicates that both women enjoy an amicable relationship. Anna has opened Käthe's eyes to some contemporary women's issues (II, 198), and conferred with her on certain personal matters. In Act III, for example, Käthe pleads with Anna to counsel her on a matter that may have been discussed away from the present action of the play, since no explicit reference is made to the particular advice that Käthe is seeking from Anna:

Frau Käthe: [...] Rate mir, Anna.

> Fräulein Anna: Ich kann dir nicht raten. Ich fürchte mich, dir zu raten.
> Frau Käthe: Du fürchtest dich?
> Fräulein Anna: Ich hab' dich viel zu lieb, viel zu lieb, Käthchen! (III, 220)

It is evident that Anna has influenced Käthe and prompted her to think about her own problems and the situation of German women. Käthe recalls a conversation with Anna to her mother-in-law:

> "In vielen Dingen muß ich Fräulein Anna recht geben. Sie sagte neulich: wir Frauen lebten in einem Zustand der Entwürdigung. Da hat sie ganz recht. Das fühl' ich hundertmal.
>
> Wir sind wirklich und wahrhaftig ein verachtetes Geschlecht.--Denke mal: es gibt einen Paragraphen in unseren Gesetzen--[...]--, danach hat der Mann noch heute das Recht, seine Frau in mäßiger Weise körperlich zu züchtigen" (II, 198).

Johannes holds Anna out to Käthe as a model. The resulting pressure contributes to Käthe's near break-down. Had Johannes not constantly compared Käthe's perceived short-comings with Anna's strengths, one wonders if Anna's presence might have worked still more positively in Käthe's favour. Käthe is acutely aware of her so-called short-comings, and desperately wants to enrich both her life and that of her husband (II, 213).

Käthe is also fond of Anna, and although her worry grows concerning her husband's attachment to the young intellectual companion, she never blames her marital problems on Anna. This enhances Käthe's positive image, for she handles the situation with maturity--this in contrast to her in-laws and Braun, who view Anna as the sole factor in Johannes's downfall

and the disruption of the family (III, 228; IV, 242). In the final scene Käthe blames Herrn and Frau Vockerat for Johannes's downfall, not Anna. "Mutter! Vater! Ihr habt ihn zum Äußersten getrieben" (V, 258). This closing scene is evidence of the growth which occurs, as Käthe recognizes the true circumstances behind Johannes's despair. It is not Anna Mahr who has brought about his downfall, but the conventions of tradition which are incorporated in Johannes's parents.

Käthe is trapped within the confines of a patriarchal milieu much like Helene Krause and Toni Selicke. She is aware, for example, that she is not believed to be the perfect intellectual companion for her husband (II, 213), and knows that the birth of Philip is not the answer to their problems (I, 172); she deals with household problems and with practical daily issues like the payment of the family's bills (II, 208); she is aware of her own short-comings and knows that Anna excels in these areas (II, 211). Käthe is normally calm at times when other characters are highly distressed (e.g. the first time Anna leaves at the end of Act III, 218-21). Moreover, she takes command in the final scene, when she realizes the effect of Anna's departure on Johannes. She is the one who orders the maids to bring light when she fears for her husband's safety (V, 258). Clearly, her weaknesses are perceived by others who simply assume that she is incapable and emotionally unstable.

While Käthe is trapped within the confines of a patriarchal social hierarchy, Anna is representative of the first type of new woman to break with convention. Her commentary on the role of the German housewife (II, 210) in addition to her interests in Johannes's philosophical work (I, 189) and modern literature and theories (II, 201) present the audience with the realities of the first strains of the women's movement in Germany.

Presenting a typical German house-wife in this light underlines the differences between Käthe and Anna. They are different in many respects--Anna is a student and Käthe a housewife; one is educated at the university, the other unable to consider such circumstances due to family obligations; even Anna's health thrives during her visit, whereas Käthe's noticeably deteriorates. Käthe's character is well-defined and she demonstrates growth and development. Anna on the other hand is a complex figure and sometimes contradictory. Käthe's entrapment is contrasted with Anna's ability to break free from the traditionally prescribed roles for women and appear as one of the first truly emancipated characters in drama. Hauptmann's portrayal of the two women reflects his perception of the complexity in providing an accurate, yet realistic portrayal of the women's situation at the time. This all speaks for a positive re-assessment of Anna.

I. D. Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, if Naturalist drama by definition strives to present an accurate portrayal of life during a certain time in history, then Hauptmann's depiction of an emancipated woman cannot be discounted as negative. The women's movement was in the throes of upheaval when Hauptmann wrote his early plays.[82] Logically, a realistic depiction of emancipated women could only be as advanced as the times. Therefore, it is unjust to discount his somewhat inconsistent portrayal of Anna Mahr due to the unrealistic expectations on the part of critics wishing for a heroic leading figure. Anna Mahr is a product of her time and realistically can aspire to be no more than a positive image of females striving towards something not yet tangible for the typical woman of the time. The fact that the Anna Mahr character remains somewhat inconsistent or not fully developed speaks only for the difficulty in portraying an enlightened turn-of-the-century female.

Comparison between Hauptmann's two plays Vor Sonnenaufgang and Einsame Menschen shed light on the direction of his views on emancipation. The differences indicate an obvious shift in emphasis with respect to the portrayal of women. Vor Sonnenaufgang depicts a travelling male intellectual, Loth, who disrupts the order of the Krause household, whereas Hauptmann's later play depicts a travelling female student, Anna, who serves the same function. In

---

[82]Evans 35-69.

Hauptmann's earlier work, Helene Krause commits suicide as Loth leaves her to travel onward. A reversal of this phenomenon occurs in Einsame Menschen when indications of Johannes's suicide follow the departure of Anna Mahr. Finally, it is important to note that, after the disruption in the Vockerat's family life, the weak woman left behind survives and demonstrates growth.

It is evident that Gerhart Hauptmann's drama Einsame Menschen broke new ground with respect to the portrayal of women. The author's work draws attention to a variety of social problems which existed within the oppressive, patriarchal domain, the most important of which concentrated on an array of women's issues.

II. Heimat

Hermann Sudermann's (1857-1928) greatest dramatic success was his third play Heimat. The drama, which won critical acclaim world-wide, was written in 1893.[83] Like Hauptmann's Einsame Menschen, Sudermann's play has as its leading female figure an emancipated woman. More importantly, this play also expresses Naturalist playwrights' desire to shift away from depictions of women trapped in a patriarchal and oppressive environment, and to look at the problems and possibilities of a truly emancipated woman.

The depiction of the leading female, Magda Schwartze, points to the author's awareness of the necessity for women's emancipation and the need for women to develop their own personalities fully. William Diamond states that, "[...] Magda is representative of the new woman who demands respect for her own individuality."[84] Sudermann also demonstrates the complexities in this fight for individuality and women's

---

[83]The success of Sudermann's dramas is unprecedented. Rodney Harold Mathers notes the following: "For many years Sudermann had been the most widely played living German dramatist, and by the turn of the century, with the firm establishment of the star system and the 'long run' commercial theater, it is probably safe to surmise that his plays had been presented more often than those of any other German dramatist of the nineteenth century." Rodney Harold Mathers, "Sudermann and the Critics. Analysis of the Criticism of Sudermann's Works and of his Revolt against the Literary Criticism of his Time", diss., U of Southern California, 1951, 70.

[84]William Diamond, "Hermann Sudermann," Monatshefte 21 (1929) : 157.

freedom, along with suffering and pain which accompany any movement which exercises a challenge against existing orders. Magda Schwartze is a woman with potential, strength and vitality, who embodies the qualities of "individuality or unfettered personal freedom."[85]

Magda is portrayed as a confident and assured character, a leading female figure even more positively developed than Hauptmann's Anna Mahr. Magda represents a will to change after she is forced to "become" emancipated due to unfavourable circumstances which occurred twelve years prior to the immediate action of the play.

Further basic similarities to Hauptmann's play also point to a positive picture of a complex character. Like Hauptmann's Einsame Menschen, this play depicts an emancipated young woman intruding on a patriarchally ordered bourgeois household. As in Hauptmann's play, this rebellious female has a destructive effect on important men in those homes--yet she also has a positive impact on a young woman previously trapped in that household. Sudermann, like Hauptmann, offers a realistic yet essentially positive look at the collision of emancipated women and the old order.

Also like Hauptmann's drama, Sudermann's play connects this young woman's defiance against the old social order with a rebellion against prevailing conventions in literature and theatre. Magda's intrusion, like Anna Mahr's, brings with it

---

[85]Diamond 157.

a shift in focus from the expected orientation on a male hero to interactions involving the struggles of oppressed or exiled women. Additionally, Magda is herself an artist, and her depiction involves evocations of other literary works, with the result that her portrayal also involves rebellion against literary tradition. As well as focusing on a strong and problematic woman--this play deals with Magda's return to her "Heimat"--it uses that woman as a vehicle for provocative turns against traditions. Magda is an exotic artist: she has become a star opera singer, adopting a flamboyantly Mediterranean persona evoking a realm of art as much at odds with the opening atmosphere of this "bürgerliches Trauerspiel" as she is with her father's world.

The play's plot evokes and alters that of one of its important forerunners: Friedrich Hebbel's Maria Magdalene. As well as depicting the clash of a wayward daughter and her uncompromising father, Sudermann also alludes to Hebbel's play with the names of the two daughters, Marie and Magdalena. Thus while the portrayal of Magda's struggle invites reflection on social problems, her involvement with the play's paedological elements further encourages contemplation how literature and theatre treat women's issues.

II. A. Authoritative Men and the Established Bourgeois Order

Similar to Anna Mahr's arrival in Einsame Menschen, Magda's homecoming represents an "intrusion" into a firmly established order. Magda refused to marry the local pastor

twelve years ago, and was forced from the family home at an early age by her father. She made her way to Berlin from her "Provinzialhauptstadt" to scratch out a meagre existence in hopes of one day becoming a stage actress. Magda eventually earned her passage into the rites of celebrity status, and has become the celebrated Italian singer Magdallena del'Orta.

Magda bursts into the action of the play with her unconventional behaviour, a result of many years of supporting herself and a child she has raised alone, followed by years of success and the ability to do anything she desires. In town for a gala concert, she arrives one afternoon at the family home where established existence of her former life still prevails. Magda finds everything exactly as it was before her swift departure so many years ago, from the position of the furniture (II, 60-61)[86] to the authoritative manner in which her father still conducts the household. Early in the play he remarks to Dr. von Keller, "Sehn Sie, in diesem Hause herrscht ganz altmodisch noch die väterliche Autorität.--Und wird herrschen, so lange ich lebe" (I, 26).

This play, like other Naturalist dramas directs the attention of the readers and audiences to pertinent social issues in order to stimulate critical thought, rather than to focus attention or foster sympathy for an individual character. A traditional dramatic approach would dictate an

---

[86]Hermann Sudermann, Heimat (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1911). All subsequent quotes will be taken from this edition of the text.

examination of Oberstleutnant Schwartze and Dr. von Keller with a sensitive treatment of their problems. This drama does not, however, focus on these two. The male characters in this play are actually cast in a negative light, drawing positive attention to Magda and her concerns, which represent on a broader scale the problems of emancipated women and their attempts to break with confining established orders.

Magda's father and especially Dr. von Keller are portrayed in such a way that they draw critical attention to bourgeois moral standards. Schwartze's traditional and authoritative attitudes call for critical reflection in an ever-changing society. He is "[...] the old-fashioned father with his patriarchal idea of authority and home, the father who sees the world through his military notions of pride and honor [...]."[87] The concept of honour is of utmost importance to Schwartze, hence the tremendous difficulties in accepting Magda back into the family home.

Magda disgraced the family name when she refused to marry Pastor Heffterdingk and fled to Berlin. Her father's honour has been so greatly ruined that upon hearing of his eldest daughter's return home, Schwartze's reaction is, "Magda ist nicht mehr mein Kind" (I, 39). Magda's visit to her old home culminates in a clash of the old order and the new, as stated by Paul Whitaker,

---

[87]Diamond 157.

> "There immediately arises a conflict between the traditional authority of middle-class morality, as symbolized in the person of her father, and the integrity of her own personality, her proud uncompromising insistence on inner freedom."[88]

After leaving the family home, it is evident that Magda continued to make individual choices in an environment that she alone controls. Her astounded father listens while she describes the power she has in her world: "Die Welt, die ich beherrsche [...]. Was ich thue, schickt sich dort, weil ich es thue" (II, 64). Her choice of lifestyle contradicts everything for which her father stands. She travels with a cat and a parrot and an entourage of questionable characters, including a very young voice instructor (II, 63). She can afford every luxury that money can buy, including trunks of clothes and silk items (III, 88).

This "decadence," however, serves to heighten her fierce individuality which ultimately pits her against her authoritative father. She is determined to control everything in her world. At the same time Magda's control is expected to evaporate once she enters the confines of her family home, a world which her father is determined to control. Magda's proud declaration that no one has the right to advise her in any matter brings the following response from her father: "Nun, mein Kind, von heute ab nimmt dein alter Vater dies Recht wieder für sich in Anspruch!" (II, 64)

---

[88]Paul K. Whitaker, "The Inferiority Complex in Hermann Sudermann's Life and Works," Monatshefte (40) 1948 : 78.

The closing scenes indicate that Magda's father is unable to come to grips with his daughter's emancipation. Leopold Schwartze is physically and emotionally ruined, yet to the very end he tries to force his will upon his daughter:

> Schwartze: Ja, ich habe deinem Verlobten mein Ehrenwort gegeben. Und so was muß gehalten werden, das siehst du doch ein?
> Magda: Ja, wenn das nun aber nicht in deiner Macht steht [...]?
> Schwartze: Dann muß ich dran sterben [...]; man kann doch nicht länger leben, wenn man...Du bist doch Offizierstochter. Das ist dir doch klar? (III, 160-61)

Similarly, Dr. von Keller's convictions confirm that Magda is expected to comply with his demands. He admits that he does not love Magda, yet insists that he marry her in order to preserve his honour, as she is the mother of his child (III, 154). Understandably the child must remain in hiding, so that Keller's reputation is not damaged by the revelation of an illegitimate child (III, 157). In addition to this, Keller expects Magda to give up her career as a singer in order to support his career. Magda agrees to her father's demands that she marry von Keller. But when her personal freedom is infringed upon, she refuses to comply. Magda's goals or individual rights are of no concern to Keller--maintaining his honour is his only interest, as is clearly outlined in one of the doctor's speeches concerning the role of women:

> "Und im übrigen, sehn Sie: das Weib, das ideale Weib, wie die moderne Zeit es sich ausmalt, soll ja die Gefährtin, die treue, hingebende Helferin ihres Mannes sein..." (III, 156).

Both male characterizations invite the audience to question the establishment of patriarchal, bourgeois existence. Traditional moral views insist that a totally self-sufficient, wealthy and successful woman abandon her personal pursuits acquired through years of sacrifice and struggle to break free from conventional expectations.

Sudermann draws attention to the fact that old established orders remain steadfast, uncompromising yet threatened when confronted with a revolution which would challenge any facet of the patriarchal domain. In Heimat the old patriarchal order is called into question, and the audience must critically evaluate its premise. The audience is invited to weigh the evidence in favour of a break from the traditional order, thus avoiding the conventional habit of forming emotional ties with the hero in a play. Magda's presence effectively draws attention to the emancipation issue and its complexities, diverting attention away from the male characters in the play.

II. B. The Emancipated Woman's Rebellion Against Old Art and Old Orders

Allusions to other artistic works and references to artistic activities are two important aspects of Sudermann's drama. First of all, there are striking parallels concerning thematic implications with Friedrich Hebbel's drama Maria Magdalene (1844). Magda's profession as a singer also suggests a critical view of existing norms. An assessment of

these two elements provides insights that support the basic premise that Magda is a positive figure.

The first clue that invites the reader of audience to ponder Hebbel's work as a possible model for Sudermann's play are the names of the two leading women in Heimat--Marie and her sister Magdalena.[89] Both works depict a bourgeois family ruled by an authoritative father who controls the women in his domain. The concept of honour plays a meaningful role in both plays, and ultimately it is the male characters' notions of honour which lead to their downfalls. Oberstleutnant Schwartze and Meister Anton display a fierce loyalty to the moral standards which are determined by the bourgeois/middle class establishment. These moral codes are to be observed by members of the respective families as well, creating an oppressive patriarchal environment which stifles family life. The question of social ethics in relation to individual life is a theme which is present in both works, and ultimately affects the daughters Magda in Heimat and Klara in Maria Magdalene.

This play echoes Hebbel's play--and in some ways also Hauptmann's Vor Sonnenaufgang--in complex and revealing ways to signal similar concerns as well as to utter a more emphatic call for change from earlier times and earlier plays. As

---

[89]References to Magda as "Magdalena" are few, although in the excitement and anticipation of Magda's return, Franziska, Schwartze (I, 39) and Marie (I, 44) do make a point of mentioning her by her full name. Another possible reference here is to Magda's Italian stage name Maddalena.

Sudermann unfolds his portrayal of a young woman who has transgressed against the morality of her parents--who has become pregnant out of wedlock and who is acting in such a way as to injure deeply her iron-willed father and his sense of honour--he also urges reader and audience to recall the well-known play by Hebbel with its similar basic plot. The names of Sudermann's two leading female figures alone evoke Hebbel. This and other detailed similarities--the motif of mysteriously sent flowers, for example, or the confrontation with the base, cellar-dwelling "fiancé"--alert reader or audience to the basic echoes of Hebbel's theme and plot and thus invite comparisons and contrasts above all between the fate of the two central female figures, Hebbel's Klara and Sudermann's Magda.

Significant, then, are the changes that Sudermann makes. He seems to take up Hebbel's positive portrayal of an independently willed and morally strong female and develop further the possibility of such independence triumphing and surviving. While Hebbel's heroine--and, like her, Helene Krause in Hauptmann's first drama--find escape only in suicide, Sudermann has his heroine reversing that constellation. Much as Hauptmann's Einsame Menschen reverses the closing situation of his Vor Sonnenaufgang--he has the woman survive, the man seek suicide--Sudermann evokes and then revokes Hebbel. He links his portrayal of a vital and strong woman with poetological references implying a departure from

earlier "bourgeois tragedies." Klaus Matthias sums up: "Heimat fügt sich dann der bei Hebbels Maria Magdalene vorerst endenden Linie an als ein neuer Beginn, als Thema der zu Selbstbewußtsein in Freiheit gelangten emanzipierten Frau."[90]

These artistic references in Sudermann's drama point once again to positive implications concerning the role of women. Hebbel's Klara represents a will to change the existing patriarchal order, as does Sudermann's Magda. Sudermann, however, takes this challenge to the established rule one step further, as Magda goes on living in the new complex world of her making. The depiction of Magda's artistic activities also points to change within the old system. Magda's occupation stands firmly in contrast to the values which are held by the bourgeois moral majority. Her decision to break free into this "immoral" line of work is parallel with her departure from the established order as well.

A second facet of artistic allusions involves Magda's singing. Her chosen field is one that stands in opposition to the conservative norms of society. Gunter Walter Richter notes that this contrast is one of the basic elements of Sudermann's critique of society. "[...] Sudermann bedient

---

[90]Klaus Matthias, "Kerr und die Folgen--Analyse der Sudermann-Kritik als Perspektive einer Neubewertung seiner Dramen," Hermann Sudermann. Werk und Wirkung, ed. Walter T. Rix (Würzburg: Königshausen + Neumann, 1980) 85.

sich auch hier der Technik der Kontrastierung: er stellt den Künstler dem Bürger gegenüber."[91]

The best example of this technique occurs in the third act when Frau Schwartze has invited the wives of Oberstleutnant Schwartze's influential friends to meet her famous daughter. Frau Schwartze is very proud of the fact that she and her husband have such important friends. She remarks to Magda, "Mit denen verkehren wir" (III, 91). The names and titles of these "important" people have ceased to impress Magda, and she handles the situation with humour. Additionally, an important parallel may be drawn between these roles and theatre. These "prominent" people with their titles represent old roles and old theatre that is being criticized by Sudermann when he depicts Magda jesting their stature and position.

This scene points to some of the absurd formalities necessary for proper conduct in these social circles, and placing Magda among these women serves only to intensify her powerful individuality and her abandonment of this lifestyle. When Frau Generalin von Klebs arrogantly inquires about the presence of daughters from "good" families in the theatre, Magda retorts, "Nein, gnädige Frau, die sind meistens zu dumm dazu" (III, 112). After the departure of the ladies "nach der Rangordnung ab" (III, 113), Magda is scolded by her mother and

---

[91]Gunter Walter Richter, "Die Gesellschaftskritik im Prosawerk Hermann Sudermanns," diss., U of Illinois, 1975, 195.

aunt for her rudeness. Magda, the artist and free-spirit, has once again asserted her individuality, showing a complete disregard for the dictated rules of the bourgeois order.

II. C. The Positive Impact of an Emancipated Woman

Finally, Magda's relationship to her sister Marie sheds light on Sudermann's view of emancipated women. There are incidences of growth in Marie after the arrival of her sister, facts pointing to the positive portrayal of emancipated women. Diamond states that, "His [Sudermann's] women are his best drawn characters. They have the courage to face facts, to tear off conventions, and to follow the light wheresoever it may lead. They generally desire to think for themselves, to be themselves."[92] The stark contrast in personality and character of the two female figures draws our attention to Magda's unconventional attitudes, but in an affirmative manner. In this respect, Magda's role may be compared to Anna Mahr in Einsame Menschen, who positively influences young Käthe Vockerat in a similar way. For Marie Schwartze, the greatest trial is being caught between the two standards of morality which inevitably clash upon the return of Magda. "Magda embodies the principle of self-development; her father the principle of authority and conventional morality."[93]

Marie conducts her life according to the bourgeois norms set out by society and enforced by her father. Marie's

---

[92]Diamond 157.

[93]Diamond 157.

devotion to her father is obvious (I, 28), and she strives to follow his example of respectful behaviour. At the beginning of the drama she is portrayed as an unquestioning and obedient young woman, and she represents the ideal of bourgeois life. During one of her fiance's visits, Marie remarks to Max that they must behave respectfully, as she is worried what others will think. "Ein jeder hat hier vor dem andern Angst, weil jeder von der guten Meinung des andern abhängt..." (I, 12). Seeking a solution to their marriage difficulties, she asks Max to approach the pastor because "der kann ja alles" (I, 14). In the opening scenes of the play it is evident what is important to Marie: her devotion to the retention of ethical standards of behaviour, as well as her unfailing faith in the authoritative powers of her father and the church.

But like Käthe Vockerat, Marie obviously has doubts about the validity of such an existence. And like Käthe Vockerat, she is shielded from the realities of life and discouraged by her family from exercising her right as a thinking individual. Everyone tries to protect Marie from the problems in their household and the outside world. When Pastor Heffterdingk wishes to talk to Schwartze about Magda's arrival he says: "Verzeihen Sie, liebes Fräulein Mariechen, wenn wir Sie noch einmal als kleines Mädchen behandeln [...]" (I, 43). Marie's mother is so unsure of her daughter's love towards her, that she questions Marie in a child-like way about her devotion to her. "Wie das so ist zwischen uns beiden. Was man so nennt:

Stiefmutter. Das bin ich doch nicht?" (II, 50) The pastor, Marie's father and mother use diminutives when addressing the youngest daughter, who, in fact, is old enough to be engaged. During the play Marie is most often addressed as "Mariechen," "Kindchen" and "gnädiges Fräuleinchen."

Marie comprehends, however, the significance of Magda's arrival. Magda represents an element of the unknown as well as a symbol of freedom for Marie. It is obvious that she has been anticipating the arrival of her sister for a long time--a fact supported by her reaction to the news that her sister is coming home. Marie can hardly contain her excitement, and it is apparent that she awaits a rescue from her stifling environment. When Marie suspects that Magda is the anonymous sender of the mysterious flowers, she clings to her mother and cries, "Magda ist da! Mein Gott, Magda ist da!" (I, 44) When Magda's coach pulls up to the house Marie is almost beside herself: "Ach, wie hoch ist ihre Gestalt!...Sie kommt, sie kommt!...Wie werd' ich schlichtes, dummes Ding vor ihr bestehn...--Ich hab' solche Angst!" (II, 56)

The significance of Magda's arrival for Marie is immediately evident. Although Marie strives to live up to the standards of respectful living, it is apparent that she has doubts about these bourgeois standards despite her sheltered existence. The unfairness of the circumstances surrounding her marriage to Max von Wendlowski bear witness to this fact.

Magda's arrival serves to heighten Marie's awareness of a world, which is so dependent on honour and respect.

Magda's influence is most apparent when she tries to counsel her sister concerning the relationship with Max, and it is evident that Magda's presence works positively upon Marie. Magda points out the necessity of disposing with the bourgeois values of consideration and dignity with regards to the relationship. Magda questions her younger sister, "Ist dir nie der Gedanke gekommen, diesen ganzen Plunder von Rücksicht und Würde von dir abzuschütteln [...]?" (III, 95)

When Marie explains that Aunt Franziska is holding back the money necessary to facilitate the marriage, Magda offers to pay the sum instead. By undermining Franziska, Magda tries to show Marie the true character of their aunt. If Marie were concerned about the respectability of accepting her sister's offer, she surely would have refused the proposition. Marie's acceptance proves, however, that her elder sister's influence has worked positively upon her. Despite the repercussions of her actions, her love for Max overrides the possible consequences of her dishonourable deeds.

At the very end of the play it is evident that Marie has grown over the course of the drama. It is Marie who begs her father to bless Magda before he dies: "Papa, gib ihr deinen Segen, lieber Papa!" (IV, 167) This curious image of the family surrounding the dying patriarch draws critical attention away from Schwartze's plight and towards the

circumstances surrounding the relationships within the family. Old Schwartze still sees his youngest daughter as an obedient component of his authoritative world, yet Marie has changed and grown. A paradox of this harmonious family tableau is pointed out by Jürgen Viering: "[...] indem der sterbende Vater der Tochter Magda den Segen verweigert, endet das Stück keineswegs [...] mit der Wiederherstellung allseitiger Harmonie."[94] This picture forces the audience and the reader to question the circumstances which surround Magda's portrayal and the critical picture that is evoked by such an image.

II. D. Concluding Remarks

One of Hermann Sudermann's greatest achievements in his drama Heimat is that he points to the necessity for change of the women's situation in modern society. Magda Schwartze represents the ultimate embodiment of an emancipated woman. One of the prime functions of the author's female characters in Heimat is to point to this necessity of emancipation, and a move away from the old patriarchal order which functions to suppress women in their drive for freedom and individuality.

The dramatist's female figures are strong, and so is their rebellion against the established order. Paul Whitaker describes the relationship between individuality and the dominate social rule and the type of behaviour which must be

---

[94]Jürgen Viering, "'Für Idyllen war kein Platz in meinem Leben.' Zur Familienthematik in Sudermanns Gesellschaftsdramen," Hermann Sudermann. Werk und Wirkung, ed. Walter T. Rix (Würzburg: Königshausen + Neumann, 1980) 127.

rejected in order to achieve true individual freedom: "[...] the individual who would preserve the inner freedom essential to the creative personality must be uncompromising in his resistance to the tyranny of the social authority [...]."[95] Magda embodies this concept of individuality, as she strives to exert her own will as an individual and as a woman.

---

[95]Whitaker 79.

Conclusion

Holz and Schlaf, Hauptmann and Sudermann depict in their dramas female characters who function in a modern society, representative of the true situation in the late nineteenth century. Naturalist playwrights sought to describe situations in this evolving society that dealt with issues such as industrialization and socialist reform. Another of these revolutionary phenomena was women's emancipation.

The four Naturalist plays discussed in this thesis depict both trapped and emancipated women, yet they collectively portray essentially positive figures who must struggle with the established norms of society in order to demonstrate the need for emancipatory change. Die Familie Selicke and Vor Sonnenaufgang emphasize trapped women who do not break free from their suppressed environments, whereas Einsame Menschen and Heimat depict truly emancipated female characters who recognize the need for break with convention.

In spite of the demonstrable interest that these authors show for women's issues, the trend in criticism dealing with the portrayal of these female characters suggests that these playwrights were incapable of presenting a compassionate, yet objective view of women and their concerns. This thesis shows, however, that the characterization of these women is positive and realistic, demonstrating a need for change.

This trend is evident when the trapped female characters in the two early plays are contrasted with the emancipated women in the later dramas. Both Helene Krause and Toni Selicke are left in their confining milieus, whereas the male "hero" makes a swift departure into the free world. Both characters demonstrate the effects of entrapment--Toni, it may be assumed, is left emotionally "dead," and Helene commits suicide. A reversal of this phenomenon is seen in the later plays, demonstrating the need for an reassessment of the established, patriarchal order. Anna Mahr flees back to her intellectual world and leaves Johannes in his stifling atmosphere, provoking his suicide. Magda Schwartze will likewise return to the world that she governs, after her father fails to come to terms with her freedom and dies.

There is an additional feature common to all of the plays. In the four dramas the relationship of women to art and poetry calls constant attention to the need for a break with a problematic tradition. The unemancipated women demonstrate the destructive effect of adherence to old poetry that upholds old attitudes. The emancipated women play an important role in passages that speak for a break with old approaches.

Although these plays have often been attacked by feminist critics since the 1890's, a closer investigation supports a defense of their contribution to social and literary change. They take a first step in realistic portrayal of situations

regarding change, placing increasing emphasis on the possibilities of emancipated women. Also, they make poetry's relationship to such problems a significant theme in a way that invites, critical reflection on the social problems portrayed in place of emotional involvement with the heroes. In this way they anticipate later trends in drama and the portrayal of women in what Janelle Reinelt describes as their struggle to break with the social and artistic status quo.[96]

---

[96]cf. Janelle Reinelt, "Rethinking Brecht: Deconstruction, Feminism, and the Politics of Form," Essays on Brecht. The Brecht Yearbook 15 (1990), John Fuegi et al., eds. (Madison: International Brecht Society, 1990) 99.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Literature

Hauptmann, Gerhart. Gerhart Hauptmann Sämtliche Werke. Ed. Hans-Egon Hass. Centenar Ausgabe. Vol. 1. Frankfurt/M: Propyläen, 1966-74. 11 vols.

Holz, Arno and Johannes Schlaf. Familie Selicke. Stuttgart: Reclam, 1966.

Sudermann, Hermann. Heimat. Stuttgart: Cotta, 1911.

Secondary Literature

Allan, Lorelei. "Naturalists and the Woman Question: Images of Middle-Class 'Emanzipierte' in German and Scandinavian Drama." Diss. Brown University, 1982.

Andreas-Salome, Lou. "Ein höllandisches Urteil über moderne deutsche Dramen." Freie Bühne für modernes Leben 2 (1891) : 696-701.

---. "Ibsen, Strindberg, Sudermann." Freie Bühne für den Entwickelungskampf der Zeit 4 (1893) : 149-54.

Barnstorff, Hermann. Die soziale, politische und wirtschaftliche Zeitkritik im Werke Gerhart Hauptmanns. Jena: Walter Biedermann, 1938.

Batley, E.M. "Functional Idealism in Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Einsame Menschen': An Interpretation." German Life and Letters 23 (1970) : 243-54.

Baumgaertel, Gerhard. "Gerhart Hauptmann's Theme of 'Engagement Manqué' in the Critical Treatment of His Early Characters." Revue des langues vivantes 30 (1964) : 307-25.

Bellmann, Werner. "Gerhart Hauptmann: 'Vor Sonnenaufgang' (1889)." Interpretationen. Dramen des Naturalismus. Ed. Werner Bellmann. Stuttgart: Reclam, 1988. 7-46.

Bernhardt, Rüdiger. "Gerhart Hauptmanns 'Vor Sonnenaufgang.'" Weimarer Beiträge 6 (1984) : 971-87.

Bluhm, Heinz. "Die Bewertung der Sinnenwelt in Hauptmanns Dramen 'Einsame Menschen' und 'Die Versunkene Glocke.'" Monatshefte 29 (1937) : 341-53.

Bockstahler, O.L. "Sudermann and Ibsen." The German Quarterly 5 (1932) : 54-57.

Bryan, George B. An Ibsen Companion. A Dictionary-Guide to the Life, Works, and Critical Reception of Henrik Ibsen. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1984.

Coupe, W.A. "An Ambiguous Hero: In Defence of Alfred Loth." German Life and Letters (31) 1977 : 13-22.

Cowen, Roy C. Der Naturalismus. Komentar zu einer Epoche. München: Winkler, 1973.

---. Hauptmann Kommentar zum dramatischen Werk. München: Winkler, 1980.

---. Das deutsche Drama im 19. Jahrhundert. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1988.

Diamond, William. "Hermann Sudermann." Monatshefte 21 (1929) : 155-63.

Emrich, Wilhelm. "Arno Holz und die moderne Kunst." Protest und Verheissung. Studien zur klassischen und modernen Dichtung. Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1960. 155-68.

---. "Der Tragödientypus Gerhart Hauptmanns." Protest und Verheissung. Studien zur klassischen und modernen Dichtung. Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1960. 193-205.

Evans, Richard J. The Feminist Movement in Germany 1894-1933. SAGE Studies in 20th Century History 6. London: SAGE Publications, 1976.

Fehlau, Uland E. "Another Look at Hauptmann's 'Einsame Menschen.'" Monatshefte 42 (1950) : 409-13.

Feise, Ernst. "Hauptmanns 'Einsame Menschen' und Ibsens 'Rosmersholm.' Zugleich ein Beitrag zum Verständnis des naturalistischen Dramas." The Germanic Review 10 (1935) : 145-65.

Finney, Gail. Women in Modern Drama. Freud, Feminism, and the European Theater at the Turn of the Century. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1989.

Fontane, Theodor. "Die Familie Selicke (1890)." Deutsche Literaturkritik. Von Heine bis Mehring (1830-1900). Ed. Hans Mayer. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1976. 829-31.

---. "Vor Sonnenaufgang (1889)." Deutsche Literaturkritik. Von Heine bis Mehring (1830-1900). Ed. Hans Mayer. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1976. 819-28.

Giesing, Michaela. Ibsens Nora und die wahre Emanzipation der Frau. Zum Frauenbild im wilhelminischen Theater. Ed. Renate Möhrmann. Studien zum Theater, Film und Fernsehen 4. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1984.

Gilg-Ludwig, Ruth. "Die internationalen Aspekte des deutschen Naturalismus Heroismus und Emanzipation bei G. Hauptmann." Actes du Ve congrés de l'Association internationale de littérature comparée. ..., 1969. 261-68.

Guthke, Karl S. Gerhart Hauptmann. Weltbild im Werk. Uni-Taschenbücher 982. München: Francke, 1980.

Heuser, Frederick W.J. "Biographic and Autobiographic Elements in Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Einsame Menschen.'" The Germanic Review 22 (1947) : 218-25.

Hilscher, Eberhard. Gerhart Hauptmann. Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1969.

---. Gerhart Hauptmann. Leben und Werk. Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1988.

Hoefert, Sigfrid. "Aufnahme und Wirkung W.M. Garschins im deutschen Sprachraum--Besonders im Hinblick auf Gerhart Hauptmann." Michigan Germanic Studies 1 (1975) : 242-252.

---. Das Drama des Naturalismus. 3rd ed. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1979.

---. Internationale Bibliographie zum Werk Gerhart Hauptmanns. 2 vols. Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1986-89.

Hortenbach, Jenny C. Freiheitsstreben und Destruktivität. Frauen in den Dramen August Strindbergs und Gerhart Hauptmanns. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1965.

Kafitz, Dieter. "Struktur und Menschenbild naturalistischer Dramatik." Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie 97 (1978) : 225-55.

Keefer, L.B. "Woman's Mission in Hauptmann's Dramas." The Germanic Review 9 (1934) : 35-52.

Kluge, Gerhart. "Das verfehlte Soziale. Sentimentalität und Gefühlskitsch im Drama des deutschen Naturalismus."

Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie 96 (1977) : 195-234.

Leppmann, Wolfgang. Gerhart Hauptmann. Leben, Werk und Zeit. Bern: Scherz, 1986.

Mahal, Günther. Naturalismus. München: Fink, 1975.

Marshall, Alan. The German Naturalists and Gerhart Hauptmann. Reception and Influence. European University Studies 556. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1982.

Martini, Fritz. Nachwort. Die Familie Selicke. Drama in drei Aufzügen. By Arno Holz and Johannes Schlaf. Stuttgart: Reclam, 1966. 67-85.

Mathers, Rodney Harold. "Sudermann and the Critics. Analysis of the Criticism of Sudermann's Works and of his Revolt against the Literary Criticism of his Time." Diss. U of Southern California, 1951.

Matthias, Klaus. "Kerr und die Folgen--Analyse der Sudermann-Kritik als Perspektive einer Neubewertung seiner Dramen." Hermann Sudermann. Werk und Wirkung. Ed. Walter T. Rix. Würzburg: Königshausen + Neumann, 1980. 31-86.

Maurer, Warren R. Gerhart Hauptmann. Twayne's World Author Ser. 670. Boston: Twayne, 1982.

McInnes, Edward. "The Domestic Dramas of Gerhart Hauptmann: Tragedy or Sentimental Pathos?" German Life and Letters 20 (1966) : 53-60.

---. German Social Drama 1840-1900: From Hebbel to Hauptmann. Stuttgart: Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1976.

Mellen, Philip. "Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Einsame Menschen': Christ in Crisis." Germanic Notes 11 (1980) : 41-44.

---. "Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Vor Sonnenaufgang' and the Parable of the Sower." Monatshefte 74 (1982) : 139-44.

Müller-Salget, Klaus. "Autorität und Familie im naturalistischen Drama." Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie 103 (1984) : 502-19.

Münchow, Ursula. Deutscher Naturalismus. Berlin: Akademie, 1968.

Oellers, Norbert. "Spuren Ibsens in Gerhart Hauptmanns frühen Dramen." Teilnahme und Spiegelung. Festschrift für Horst Rüdiger. Eds. Beda Allemann and Erwin Koppen. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1975. 397-414.

Osborne, John. The Naturalist Drama in Germany. Manchester: Manchester UP Rowman and Littlefield, 1971.

Pascal, Roy. From Naturalism to Expressionism. German Literature and Society 1880-1918. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973.

Pickle, Linda Schelbitzki. "Self-Contradictions in the German Naturalists' View of Women's Emanzipation." The German Quarterly 2 (1979) : 442-56.

Pott, Wilhelm Heinrich. Literarische Produktivität. Untersuchungen zum ästhetischen Verfahren bei Arno Holz, Alfred Döblin, Bertolt Brecht und Alexander Kluge. European University Studies 758. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1984.

Reinelt, Janelle. "Rethinking Brecht: Deconstruction, Feminism, and the Politics of Form." Essays on Brecht. The Brecht Yearbook 15 (1990). Eds. John Fuegi et al. Madison: International Brecht Society, 1990. 99-111.

Richter, Gunter Walter. "Die Gesellschaftskritik im Prosawerk Hermann Sudermanns." Diss. U of Illinois, 1975.

Saari, Sandra. "Female Become Human: Nora Transformed." Contemporary Approaches to Ibsen. Eds. Bjorn Hemmer and Vigdis Ystad. Oslo: Norwegian UP, 1988. 41-55.

Scheuer, Helmut. Arno Holz im litararischen Leben des ausgehenden 19. Jahrhunderts (1883-1896). Eine biographische Studie. München: Winkler, 1971.

---. "Arno Holz/Johannes Schlaf: 'Die Familie Selicke.'" Interpretationen. Dramen des Naturalismus. Ed. Werner Bellmann. Stuttgart: Reclam, 1988.

Schroeder, Sabine. "Anna Mahr in Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Einsame Menschen.' The 'Emancipated Woman' Re-examined." The Germanic Review 54 (1979) : 125-30.

Schulz, Gerhard. Arno Holz. Dilemma eines bürgerlichen Dichterlebens. München: Beck, 1974.

Shaw, Leroy R. Witness of Deceit. Gerhart Hauptmann as a Critic of Society, Berkeley: U of California P, 1958.

---. "The Strategy of Compassion. Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Einsame Menschen.'" The Playwright & Historical Change. Dramatic Strategies in Brecht, Hauptmann, Kaiser & Wedekind. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1970. 20-48.

Sinden, Margaret. Gerhart Hauptmann. The Prose Plays. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1957.

---. "'Marianne' and 'Einsame Menschen.'" Monatshefte 54 (1962) : 311-21.

Sprengel, Peter. Gerhart Hauptmann. Epoche-Werk-Wirkung. München: Beck, 1984.

Stephan, Naomi. "Die Frauenfiguren in Gerhart Hauptmanns 'Einsame Menschen' und Ulrike Woerners 'Vor Frühling': Universal oder trivial?" Die Frau als Heldin und Autorin: neue kritische Ansätze zur deutschen Literatur. Ed. Wolfgang Paulsen. Bern: Franke, 1979. 190-200.

Turner, David. "'Die Familie Selicke' and the Drama of German Naturalism." Periods in German Literature. Volume II. Texts and Contexts. Ed. J.M. Ritchie. London: Oswald Wolff, 1969. 193-219.

Viering, Jurgen. "Für Idyllen war kein Platz in meinem Leben. Zur Familienthematik in Sudermanns Gesellschaftsdramen." Hermann Sudermann Werk und Wirkung. Ed. Walter T. Rix. Würzburg: Königshausen + Neumann, 1980. 113-33.

Whitaker, Paul K. "The Inferiority Complex in Hermann Sudermann's Life and Works." Monatshefte 40 (1948) : 69-81.

Whitinger, Raleigh. "Art Works and Artistic Activity in Holz/Schlaf's 'Die Familie Selicke': Reflections on the Play's Naturalistic and Epic Consistency." Michigan Germanic Studies 14 (1988) : 139-50.

---. Gerhart Hauptmann's 'Vor Sonnenaufgang': On Alcohol and Poetry in German Naturalist Drama." The German Quarterly 63 (1990) : 83-91.

Witkowski, Georg. The German Drama of the Nineteenth Century. Trans. L.E. Horning. New York: Henry Holt, 1909.

Zucker, Adolf E. "The Ibsenian Villain in Sudermann's Heimat." The Germanic Review 3 (1928) : 208-17.